KERRANG!
THE 100 GREATEST HEAVY METAL ALBUMS OF ALL TIME
A FABULOUS FOUR-PART SUPPLEMENT
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SEE INSIDE BACK COVER

AWRIGHT, KIDZ . . . dis is da big one!

'The 100 Greatest Heavy Metal Albums Of All Time' . . . a solid century of sonic sensation, as compiled by *Kerrang!* 's crack-shot, cranked-up, tanked-up team of boozers, croozers and three-time loozers!

The way it works is this:

This issue of *Kerrang!* (number 220) contains a FREE colour booklet, bound into the centre pages, containing all the fun-filled facts behind the riotous records wot feature in 'The 100 Greatest Heavy Metal Albums Of All Time' – positions 100 to 76.

Also FREE in this highly collectable edition (and, coincidentally, the very thing you're holding in your hands at this moment in time) is a full colour, stiff card cover – to be used as a folder to keep the pull-out pages safe, snug 'n' secure!

The next two issues of *Kerrang!* (numbers 221 and 222) will include additional FREE colour booklets, giving y'all the rampant run-through positions 75 to 26.

. . . And finally, *Kerrang!* 223 will deliver all the scam on the top 25 positions, enabling you to complete your fat 52 page supplement, as well as answering the all-important question: WHO IS NUMBER ONE?

So there you go: a fabulous 'n' frenetic four week series that's bound to rock all of Metaldom to its very foundations.

Before you get stuck into our selection of mega-readable re-reviews, it's worth mentioning that 'The 100 Greatest Heavy Metal Albums Of All Time' is a purely SUBJECTIVE listing.

There's bound to be some LPs which you reckon should've been included, but aren't.

And, conversely, there'll inevitably be records in there which you think shouldn't've been selected, but were!

To this end, and to allow you to have YOUR say, flip to the inside back cover of this folder and all will be revealed. . .

AWRIGHT?!

GEOFF BARTON – MANAGING EDITOR

VINNIE VINCENT INVASION
'Vinnie Vincent Invasion'
(Chrysalis BFV4 1532)
Released 1986

Robert Fleischman (vocals), Vinnie Vincent (guitar), Dana Strum (bass), Bobby Rock (drums)

IF YOU want guitars you've got 'em! Yup, at precisely the moment I slipped the needle into the grooves of this album I instinctively knew that this, indeed, was the record for me.

Full of venomous fretboard savagery, with mean riffs and brilliant vocals, the Vinnie Vincent Invasion instantly took matters into their own hands setting the standard of North American rock just that extra bit higher. Produced and mixed with one thing in mind – that the guitars would automatically explode in your face – there is surely not a sinner amongst us who would deny this record a place in the All-Time Top 100 HM albums.

Despite Vinnie's bombastic riffing, the Invasion's music remains tight and commercial right down to the last drum beat. Elegant melodies combine with impeccable musicianship to provide state of the art Heavy Metal at its very best. Backed by a great band, Vinnie displays his polished guitar licks at every available opportunity, barging the rest of the group right to the very rear of the mix.

Special mention must go to vocalist Robert Fleischman, who's helium fuelled vocals start somewhere near Geddy Lee and finishes up in outer space! A brilliant voice, one of the best, Fleischman's only shortcoming appeared to be his non Metallic appearance – short hair and blazer *à la* Graham Bonnet! Within weeks of this album hitting the racks, Fleischman was unceremoniously booted out in favour of the more svelt like appearance of Mark Slaughter.

From there though, the Invasion took a downhill dive. But this remains a masterly debut album, even if the band are now sadly no longer in existence.

DEREK OLIVER

IRON MAIDEN
'Killers'
(EMI EMC 3357)
Released 1981

Paul Di'Anno (vocals), Steve Harris (bass), Dave Murray and Adrian Smith (guitars), Clive Burr (drums)

SUPPOSEDLY, EACH successive Maiden album is the best one ever but if any (long term) fan were asked their opinion on the subject, I'd bet my boots that the names 'Killers' and 'Number Of The Beast' would be put forward most often.

Both are special but for me 'Killers' has the edge. Yes I know all about Bruce Dickinson's vocal and theatrical prowess and the future Nicko McBrain's expertise on drums, but the line-up here had a special status in the minds of all British Metal fans.

Their music has an atmosphere that really did stir something inside. They were a constant talking point and instilled an almost religious devotion from their following. It seems to me that all those extra qualities that Maiden had beyond music have strayed away over the years, or perhaps I have simply outgrown them?

Whatever, Eddie never looked more dangerous than on the sleeve of this album and the band never sounded more so.

For all his faults, Paul Di'Anno had an attitude in his voice that reflected the moodiness of a band inspired by a medieval torture device.

All the truly classic stuff may be on the first album but 'Killers' stands up better as a record against the albums of today and it does contain 'Wrathchild', 'Murders In The Rue Morgue' and 'Killers' itself.

We still had the clever instrumentals that were such an important part of Maiden's identity and the bookshelf inspirations for lyrical content were far less obvious.

AL RHODES

PAUL DI'ANNO: Iron Maiden's original killer vocalist

QUEEN
'A Night At The Opera'
(EMI EMTC 103)
Released 1975

Freddie Mercury (vocals/keyboards), Brian May (guitar/vocals), John Deacon (bass/vocals), Roger Taylor (drums/vocals)

LORD, I wonder what I would have written if I'd been in this crazy game when Queen released 'A Night At the Opera'. Record Number 29 in my then miniscule collection, it was so precious that when I left the blessed thing lying on top of our TV (heat warped vinyl don't play too good, ya know!) I had to rush off on my bicycle at the earliest opportunity to replace it!

So what was it I couldn't do without? 11 tracks of theatrical, *unsynthesized* (as the sleeve-notes took pains to point out!!) rock ranging from the brief Noel Coward (?!) inspired 'Lazing On A Sunday Afternoon', through the uncompromising bludgeon of 'I'm In Love With My Car' (composed and sung by Roger Taylor) and 'Sweet Lady', to the more genteel approach of ballads 'You're My Best Friend' and 'Love Of My Life'.

Finally, it tripped into operatic territory with 'Prophet's Song' and (of course) that record-breaking hit single 'Bohemian Rhapsody'. An incredible nine weeks at Number One, and over the Christmas period too, into the bargain.

The performances, without exception, are faultless. Freddie Mercury's vocals are pitch perfect, Brian May excells himself not only on guitar but also on the harp (adding a touch of melodic magic to 'Love Of My Life') and with a jazzy aloha ukelele during the swinging 'Good Company', while Roger Taylor and John Deacon inject vital, ever variable rhythm patterns to bind everything together.

Perhaps because of its diversity, or maybe due to the sparkling production by Roy Thomas Baker' this album sounds as fresh today as it did 13 years ago.

LYN GUY

Pic Keystone

QUEEN search stage for opera glasses as they prepare for a night on the town

URIAH HEEP
'Look At Yourself'
(Bronze ILPS 9169)
Released 1971

David Byron (vocals), Ken Hensley (keyboards/guitar), Mick Box (lead guitar), Paul Newton (bass), Ian Clark (drums)

THE GREATEST thing about Uriah Heep is that they were so goddamn overblown. Everything was geared toward the over-the-top gross-out; from Mick Box's epileptic wah-wah soloing; to Ken Hensley's oppresive, Gothic organ; to David Byron's obnoxious, theatrical vocals.

'Look At Yourself' is the best early example of Heep's style and perhaps their finest moment in terms of pure frantic energy. The album is loud and brash, in your face from start to finish yet never afraid to tone down its overkill . . .

'Shadows Of Grief' begins with a grand keyboard entrance before hitting you with a hammerblow riff that smashes along relentlessly. Abruptly the middle section turns into three minutes of spooky organ grindings and eerie howls from Byron, before coming back for a rousing finale.

Or take 'July Morning', with its extended last section in which Hensley goes stark raving mad on the synthesizer, while the band drones into oblivion behind him.

This and the title-track also feature more dazzling histrionics from the late, great Byron.

In fact, it's not widely acknowledged but it seems clear to me that David Byron had a bigger influence on many of today's singers – from Michael Sweet to King Diamond – than anyone realizes. His sad, lonely death still haunts me, as does the fact that he never was properly recognized for his talent.

But that's the story of Uriah Heep, innit? Too many 'critics' dismissed them as trash and didn't realize that the band made some of the heaviest Metal of the early '70s. 'Look At Yourself' is a testament to their excellence.

DON KAYE

AC/DC
'If You Want Blood – You Got It'
(Atlantic K50532)
Released 1978

Bon Scott (vocals), Angus Young (lead guitar), Malcolm Young (rhythm guitar), Cliff Williams (bass), Phil Rudd (drums)

I'M SURE there can't be many AC/DC fans who would say that this live album isn't the Australians' best ever release. Let's face facts shall we? 'If You Want Blood . . .' has everything a live album should possess . . . balls, energy, action, riffs and snarling, biting songs. It's also blessed with what's become known as the definitive version of the eternal AC/DC favourite 'Whole Lotta Rosie', famous for the chants of '*Angus, Angus*' that appear between the stop-start riff at the song's beginning.

But one song, no matter how good, doesn't make an album, and doesn't *have* to on this one because there are plenty of other magical moments to deal with. Side One for instance, consists of completely gonzoid, balls-to-the-wall rockers – with the exception of that sleazy old chestnut 'The Jack', (where you can just imagine the smirk on the late Bon Scott's face while he's singing it). Remember?

You get 'Riff Raff', 'Hell Ain't No Bad Place To Be', 'Bad Boy Boogie' and the frantic 'Problem Child' – feel the sting of a grown up schoolboy's whip in a whirlwind of aggression.

The flip delivers similarly explosive playing amongst the aforementioned ' . . . Rosie' and 'Rock 'N' Roll Damnation', 'High Voltage', 'Let There Be Rock' (will you just LISTEN to that mutha fuggin' guitar!!) and 'Rocker'.

Easily one of the albums made in hard rock heaven (or hell) and a live album the band will be hard pushed to top should they decide to do another with Brian Johnson on vocals! DAVE REYNOLDS

SAXON
'Wheels Of Steel'
(Carrere CALII5)
Released 1980

Biff (lead vocals), Paul Quinn and Graham Oliver (lead and rhythm guitars), Steve Dawson (bass), Pete Gill (drums)

IN THE days when the mighty Pete Gill ruled the stool and the amazing Steve Dawson was Exoceting every living thing with that bass, Saxon delivered an album that typified the Barton-induced New Wave Of British Heavy Metal maybe more than any other vinyl of its time.

The facts. Five lads from deepest Barnsley, leathers and jeans, loved motorcycles and stood for all that was Heavy Metal. Liked Priest (forefathers), and Maiden, (partners in crime and latter-day megastars).

'Wheels Of Steel' was an album to stitch patches onto your denim to. An album to mindlessly headbang to. An album to get drunk on Strongbow Dry cider to. An album to play too loud and get a telling off for.

Not one person who was into Metal way back then will deny that 'Motorcycle Man' was indeed a classic NWOBHM anthem, guaranteed to set heads bobbing,

Biff's sock-stuffed vocals soaring skywards and Graham Oliver's guitar screeching and walking along with Paul Quinn's monster rhythm.

And '(747) Strangers In The Night'. . . je-*sus* now we're reminiscing big time baby, the tune wailing and shrieking in good old early-Saxon tradition. Once again, 'WOS' formed the solid and classic base for what should have been a huge and mighty career. The follow-up, 'Strong Arm Of The Law', kept the vibe going but sadly, poor management and bad label problems have dragged Saxon down. 'Wheels . . .' is a classic testimony to what Saxon were and could've been.

STEFFAN CHIRAZI

Pic Ray Palmer

SAXON: steel a great album after all these years

STARZ
'Starz'
(Capitol ST-11539)
Released 1976

Michael Lee Smith (vocals), Richie Ranno (guitar), Brenden Harkin (guitar), Joe X Dube (drums), Peter Sweval (bass)

ALONG WITH Kiss and Angel, Starz, from New York, epitomized the glittering US hard rock scene of the mid '70s.

Their debut is the most raw and heavy of the band's short career and was produced as a no holds barred rock album with Jack 'Aerosmith' Douglas comfortably seated in the control room.

Starz songs were usually inspired by tabloid newspaper headlines and life in the big, bad apple known as New York City. Compromises were made though, check out 'Detroit Girls', a song obviously intended to try and capture the market that first took to management stablemates Kiss a year earlier. This aside Starz took no prisoners.

Anthems were everywhere. 'Boys In Action', 'Live Wire' and 'Tear It Down' were just perfect teen rebel fodder while '(She's Just A) Fallen Angel' fell in as the token streetwise ballad all about young girls making a living on the sidewalks.

Then there's the quite stunning 'Night Crawler', where Michael Lee Smith adopts the persona of a rapist to chilling effect over a blitzkrieg of guitar and drums. Vicious.

'Now I Am' ends the album much the same way, Starz coming over all dark and evil. But the main centre of controversy was 'Pull The Plug': a song inspired by newspaper reports of a young girl being kept alive on a life support system with no hope of recovery. Her family were far from pleased when they learned about the song!

DAVE REYNOLDS

JIMI HENDRIX: first smashed into the charts in 1967

Pic LFI

JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE
'Smash Hits'
(Track 613 004)
Released 1968

Jimi Hendrix (guitar/vocals), Noel Redding (bass), Mitch Mitchell (drums)

IF JIMI Hendrix's first album, 'Are You Experienced', had introduced Hendrix to an unsuspecting world as a phenomenally gifted guitarist and talented songwriter, his third release, the compilation 'Smash Hits' forced home the latter of those two qualities with unnerving style.

Lengthy and/or meandering solos/workouts were put on the back-burner (simmering until later that same year when they were re-heated again on 'Electric Ladyland'), and instead 'Smash Hits' brought together perhaps the most concentrated, potent examples of how Hendrix's mastery could also produce short, snappy, highly commercial songs without any loss of the man's magic. The fact that he also did so while retaining Mitch Mitchell's highly articulate, freewheeling, jazz-feel drumming is another unlikely triumph.

The hit single potential of Hendrix had already been demonstrated, with 'Hey Joe', the groundbreaking 'Purple Haze', and a delicately constructed 'The Wind Cries Mary' (all included on this album) having already nestled easily in the Top 10. Similarly catchy and no less power-packed tracks – 'Manic Depression' and 'Foxy Lady', were roped-in from 'Are You Experienced', and placed alongside the rollicking 'Stone Free', the swing of 'Highway Chile', and others equal to them.

And then there was 'Burning Of The Midnight Lamp', switchbacking between a simple solo guitar melody and a swirling, explosive verse. Not one of Hendrix's best-remembered songs/singles, but one with such a juiced-up flow of energy that, 11 years on, it can still – as with most of the tracks on 'Smash Hits' – send a chill rippling down the spine.

PAUL HENDERSON

BLUE ÖYSTER CULT
'On Your Feet Or On Your Knees'
(Columbia 88116)
Released 1975

Eric Bloom and Donald 'Buck Dharma' Roeser (guitars), Allen Lanier (guitar/keyboards), Joe Bouchard (bass), Albert Bouchard (drums)

BEING A bit thin in the production stakes, I've heard rumour that for the majority of committed BÖC fans this record is something of a disappointment. To them I say bollocks!

Like all great dictators of the late 20th century, Blue Öyster Cult publicise their master plan before carrying it out with ruthless efficiency. They make known their relationship with the audience in the album's opening track – 'The Subhuman'. A weird and frightfully wacky track that makes you wonder where the f**k these guys are coming from. It ain't planet earth for sure!

Of course the Cult were always humorous, sleeky subversive and mock-heavy rather than emitting any of that blowtorch supernova hustle. The key to their success has always been the audience's ability to recognise that fact.

The reason I love this album so much is because of its diverse content.

Recorded at the height of their Stateside success, it includes the *crème de la crème* of material from their first three albums. Listen to the harsh 'Dominance And Submission', a brilliant HM torture punctuated by blasts of stun guitar, Eric Bloom's vocals growling like a dark mutation of the Riddler, while Allen Lanier's keyboards are agreeably hammy in the background.

Live, they make an apparent distinction in the way they present their material, from the monolithic 'Cities On Flame With Rock And Roll', driven steadily by the Bouchard Brothers rhythm section, or the 1971 vintage 'Last Days Of May'.

Frightening stuff.

DEREK OLIVER

IRON MAIDEN
'Iron Maiden'
(EMI EMC 3330)
Released 1980

Paul Di'Anno (vocals), Dennis Stratton (guitar/vocals), Dave Murray (guitar), Steve Harris (bass/vocals), Clive Burr (drums)

WHILST IRON Maiden themselves look upon their self-titled debut with a mixture of bemusement and loathing (Steve Harris has, on several occasions, expressed the desire to kill Will Malone after the hatchet job he did on the production), I love the damn thing just about to death.

For anyone around at the time, 'Iron Maiden', for all its technical flaws, is an honest representation of the origins of a band destined to reach the top (the album crashed into the national charts at an astonishing Number Four), but one who were never gonna recapture this sort of earthiness again.

Looking back, there's still not a duffer among the eight tracks. If anything, the weakest is the single 'Running Free' (a song that still survives in their live set more than eight years later) – its rather simplistic approach wearing a little less well.

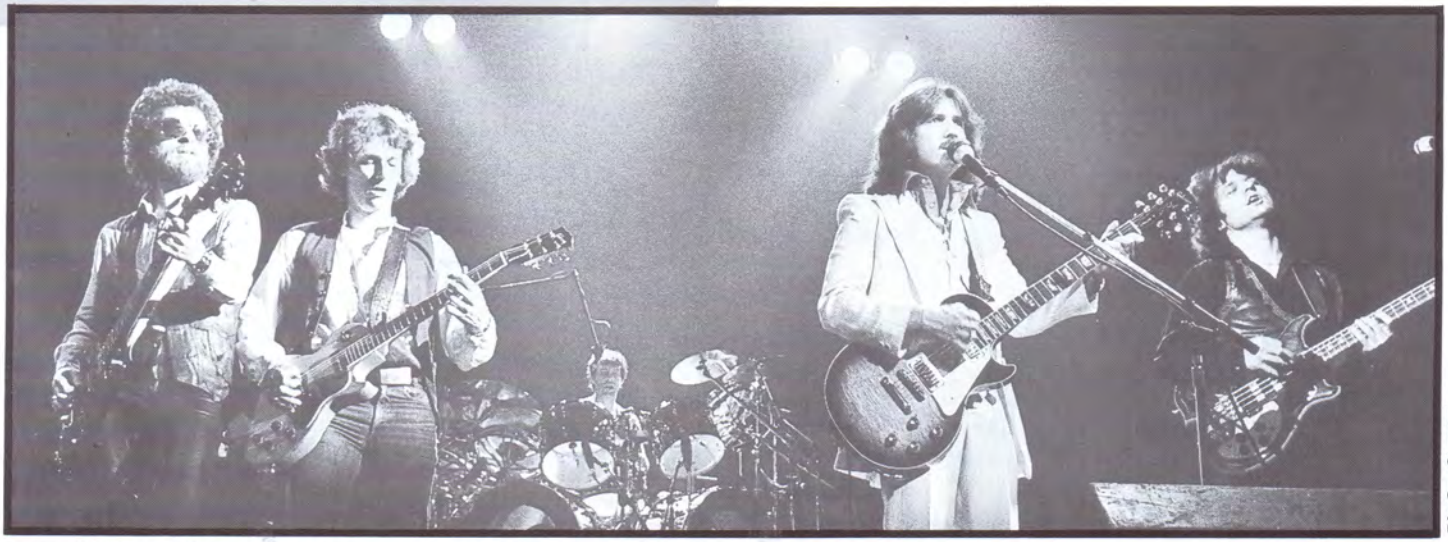
Mix the menace of opener 'Prowler' with the more gentle

tones of 'Strange World', or 'Remember Tomorrow' with the ace instrumental 'Transylvania', or the vicious 'Charlotte The Harlot' with the first of Maiden's now traditional epics 'Phantom Of The Opera' and you've got yourselves an album with a truly timeless appeal.

Of "the punks with long hair" themselves, Messrs Harris and Murray are, of course, still holding the Maiden flag high, Paul Di'Anno is currently fronting Battlezone, Cluve Burr's recently thrown his lot in with Dee Snider's Desperado, and Dennis 'Old Man' Stratton is probably collecting his pension at this very moment.

I still miss you guys.

PAUL MILLER



Pic Gus Stewart

BLUE ÖYSTER CULT: 'HM torture punctuated by bursts of stun guitar . . . '

MOTHER'S FINEST
'Iron Age'
(Epic 84924)
Released 1981

Joyce 'Baby Jean' Kennedy (vocals), Glenn Murdock (vocals, rhythm guitar), Moses Mo (lead guitar), Wizzard (bass), BB Queen (drums)

BEFORE THE likes of Living Colour and Dan Reed Network, there was this little band from Georgia called Mother's Finest. In retrospect they really were way, way ahead of their time, mixing the funk and soul of black music with "white man's rock 'n' roll" (sic).

Up until the release of 'Iron Age' their albums tended to fluctuate in quality, only their debut being able to mix the two musical styles properly. With 'Iron Age' the band – black save for Moses and BB – moved into real Metal territory with a fantastic AC/DC-inspired raunchy direction that should've had the whole world embracing them with open arms.

'Twas not to be. Mother's Finest were never taken seriously by either Metal fans or the funksters.

If you ever see this album lying around in a store then do yourselves a favour and buy it! There's Metal classics at every corner.

Openers 'Movin' On' and 'Luv Drug' feature absolutely scorching guitar and wicked vocals from the gorgeous 'Baby Jean' Kennedy.

Glenn Murdock takes over for an anthem-and-a-half with 'Rock 'N' Roll 2 Nite' and 'U Turn Me On' before Jean comes back into the fray singing the extremely sexy 'All The Way'.

Over on Side Two things are equally hot, with 'Evolution', covered a few years later under a different title by the German act called Fargo, 'Illusion' and 'Earthling'.

In all, 'Iron Age' is a savage dose of funk Metal delivered in classic but mostly forgotten Mother's Finest style.

DAVE REYNOLDS

DAVID LEE ROTH
'Skyscraper'
(Warner Bros WX 140)
Released 1988

David Lee Roth (vocals),Steve Vai (guitar), Billy Sheehan (bass), Brett Tuggle (keyboards), Gregg Bissonette (drums).

I REMEMBER the day I first heard this. A group of us huddled around the office Death Deck, a tape we had 'acquired' snug in the machine. I was expecting 10 tracks like 'Yankee Rose'. 'Knucklebones' bounded out and threw me into confusion. It apparently did the same to scuzzy young Ray Zell, who gave it a mere 'KKK½ (with a K on hold)' rating – contrary ol' sod! But I knew where he was coming from, cos at first I too thought the rough-edged Diamond had had his potato chips.

Then 'Just Like Paradise' grabbed me by the hand and led me down a dark alley one night. One thing led to another, myself an' Dave met over the speakers a few more times. . .and now it's love!

'. . .Paradise' steals the show, of course, with all the right moves that Dave and Steve have made their own. 'Hot Dog And A Shake' is, despite its title, much more Savoy than McDonalds. Certainly not Wimpy. 'Perfect Timing' makes you 'Stand Up' (but not too quick after that 'Hot Dog. . .'!), drink up an' hit 'The Bottom Line'.

Dave is a one-off, a real *mega*star. He's superleague. Steve Vai ditto. They're no passing fancy. . .this album's the same.

ALISON JOY

Pic Ross Marino/LFI

DAVID LEE ROTH and band reach for the sky!

FOGHAT: fiercesome boogie from funny lookin' buggers

QUEENSRŸCHE
'Rage For Order'
(EMI America AML 3105)
Released 1986

Geoff Tate (vocals), Chris De Garmo and Michael Wilton (guitars), Eddie Jackson (bass), Scott Rockenfield (drums)

LOVE 'EM or hate 'em, you've got to hand it to 'em, 'Rage For Order' is one of the most consummate Metal releases thus far. Nigh perfect in the production stakes (courtesy of miracle worker Neil Kernon) and unrelenting when it comes to that magic art of riffomania, the kings of the ryche really did smash down the wall of apathy that they had previously met.

The first track I ever heard from this album was 'Screaming In Digital'. Chris De Garmo and Geoff Tate played it to me on a Walkman in a Los Angeles hotel room.

I was speechless, natch, and the guys seemed more than anxious that I agreed to its supremity. They had, after all, fallen flat on their face with their first LP release 'The Warning' following a period of intense hype and needed desperately to re-establish themselves.

'Rage For Order' has it all. One of the strongest rock releases of the decade, these well mannered gentlemen from Seattle gave birth to an album that is still growing in stature. Yes, strange as it may seem I believe that the true worth of this album has yet to establish itself. Like, for instance, Priest's 'Sad Wings Of Destiny' we will only fully appreciate its monumental weight in, say, another five years, when the band are no doubt at the peak of their popularity.

11 songs and 11 bona fide classics.

Where do I begin? 'Surgical Strike'? Or should we cite 'Neue Regel' as the prime time classic? Nah, let's say it's *all* friggin' brilliant! DEREK OLIVER

FOGHAT
'Foghat Live'
(Bearsville K5518)
Released 1977

'Lonesome' Dave Peverett (vocals/guitar), Rod Price (lead guitar), Craig MacGregor (bass), Roger Earl (drums)

ALTHOUGH THEY were virtually unknown in the UK, in the late '70s Foghat (dig that name!) were apparently "the biggest grossing British act working the US stadia circuit bar Led Zeppelin and the Who". That is big as in "mega-bucks big" – but when you cop an earful of 'Foghat Live' you're gonna agree that every penny made by this band was a penny well earned.

As gritty as a gravel drive, Foghat blitzed, bluesed and boogied their way around the States in serious gung-ho fashion, wiping the floor with most of the competition, and climaxed vinyl-y with '77's live opus.

Why wasn't it a double? Who knows? But more's the pity that it wasn't as the eloquently titled 'Lonesome' Dave Peverett led his band by example, singing hard-assed blues like there was no tomorrow and boogie-ing on down with some mean rhythm playing.

We're talking a seriously hot 'n' sweaty piece of plastic here, with such monstrous anthems as 'Road Fever', 'Slow Ride', and 'I Just Wanna Make Love To You' nailing the action down both hard and righteous.

Okay, so the band may have looked like funny buggers (handlebar moustaches were *de rigeur*) but they kicked out the jams quite fiercesomely and 'Foghat Live' is an indispensable little number within the annals of rock. HOWARD JOHNSON

ANTHRAX: kontagiously klassic sekond rekord

ANTHRAX
'Spreading The Disease'
(Music For Nations MFN 62)
Released 1985

Joey Belladonna (vocals), Dan Spitz (guitar), Scott Ian (guitar) Frank Bello (bass), Charlie Benante (drums)

ALTHOUGH 'SPREADING The Disease' is hardly the band's favourite record (indeed I recall drummer Charlie Benante telling me once that he thought that some of the tunes were a little commercial and that the vocals of then new boy Joey Belladonna didn't always ring true), to these ears at least, it's Anthrax's finest moment.

A vast improvement over their

enthusiastic but definitely amatuer hour debut, 'Fistful Of Metal', it boasts an accessibility and keen ear for melody that its successors, 'Among The Living' and 'State Of Euphoria', have both lacked.

But as 'Spreading The Disease' proved emphatically, melody need not be a by-word for wimpishness – 'Stand Or Fall' and the unbelievable 'Gung-Ho' are melodic but among the fastest, most vicious Thrashers Anthrax have yet committed to vinyl.

Certainly 'Spreading The Disease' is the most important album the band have produced, catapulting them as it did from relative unknowns to fully paid-up members of the so-called "Big Four".

And it also supplied 'Madhouse', the live favourite that came close to cracking the national singles chart for the band.

Elsewhere 'Aftershock', the Punk-Metal of opener 'A.I.R.', and my personal rave, 'Armed And Dangerous' (re-recorded from their 'Armed And Dangerous' EP), make 'Spreading The Disease' essential listening for any Thrasher. PAUL MILLER

RUSH
'Rush'
(Mercury 9100 011)
Released 1974

Geddy Lee (vocals/bass), Alex Lifeson (guitars), John Rutsey (drums)

NOW WE all know that Canadian triumvirate Rush have produced some of the most astonishingly sophisticated music to have emerged from the rock genre, and we all know that percussionist extraordinaire Neil Peart has been responsible for much of that mind-blowing output. Excellent stuff it is too, but for some curious reason my fave Rush album is this, their first, released before Peart joined the band.

'Rush' isn't without its faults, not least of which is a cover of staggeringly amateur proportions, featuring Alex looking like he hasn't washed his barnet for months and Lee attempting to create the look of an Indian princess, complete with spot on forehead! Hilarious and mighty embarrassing!

The music, too, could hardly be called innovative, being basically a display of riffs that our Alex filched from Jimmy Page. But somehow, someway, this naive collection of eight heavy blues tunes, topped off by the fearsome vocal range of Lee, really does something to me. I guess it's the enthusiasm of three guys finally making their first record that ignites the spark . . . and there are some places where this record is really smoking!

Highlights? Well I honestly dig it *all*, but there are particularly noteworthy moments during opener 'Finding My Way', the heavy 'Heartbreaker'-isms of 'What You're Doing' and the long blues workout of 'Here Again'.

I'd be willing to bet money that the two remaining Rush members who played on this album would cringe in horror at the very thought of it, but in its simple and naive way, it still remains my favourite work from all of the band's output!

HOWARD JOHNSON

STARZ
'Violation'
(Capitol E-ST 11617)
Released 1977

Michael Lee Smith (vocals), Richie Ranno (guitar), Brendan Harkin (guitar), Peter Sweval (bass), Joe X. Dube (drums)

THE PERFECT American Pop/Metal album.

Produced by Jack Douglas, 'Violation' simply has *everything* going for it: it's hummable but heavy, memorable but metallic, commercial but crunchin'.

This LP is where it all came together for Starz: it's full to burstin' with trash teen anthems, played marvellously and produced exquisitely; and vocalist Michael Lee Smith turns in the pop 'n' roll performance of his life, to top it all.

If ever a band deserved serious Singles chart action on the back of an extraordinarily excellent album, then Starz were it.

Why spectacular Top 40 success eluded 'em – and, remember, they were managed by Kiss' Bill Aucoin – is frankly baffling.

I mean, just listen to any of the following three trax and see if the persistent, insistent little bugger doesn't plunge itself, meathook-like, into your memory cells with unforgiving immediacy.

'Sing It Shout It'; like a hybrid of 'Love Gun' by Kiss and the Archies' 'Sugar Sugar'. Jumpin' 'n' jaunty!

'Cherry Baby': if Poison can hit it big with junkyard rock toons like 'Talk Dirty To Me', then why didn't Starz crack it with vastly superior throwaway stuff such as this? Beats me.

'Cool One': isn't that '*coo-ca, coo-ca, coo-ca*' chorus the most ridiculous thing you've ever heard? Yeah . . . and I love it.

Elsewhere, we got 'All Night Long', 'Subway Terror' (great production FX from Mr Douglas), 'Violation' itself, and 'Is That A Street Light Or The Moon' (brilliant title).

All disposable dynamite.

GEOFF BARTON

TOM SCHOLZ and BRAD DELP of BOSTON: court in the act

BOSTON
'Boston'
(Epic S EPC 81611)
Released 1976

Brad Delp (vocals/guitar), Tom Scholz (guitars/bass/organ), Barry Goudreau (guitars), Fran Sheehan (bass), Sib Hashian (drums)

FOR ME, the first Boston album was a bit of a strange one. I only got into it after the release of 'Don't Look Back', their second album, although it eventually supplanted its successor in my affections (mainly because it *wasn't* handicapped by 'Party', the most inept, banal track Boston have ever committed to vinyl).

Recorded over several months in no less than three different studios, 'Boston' remains a remarkably cohesive debut. Be it a hard-rockin' tune like 'Smokin' or 'Rock 'N' Roll Band', a more soothing affair like 'Hitch A Ride' or the simply beautiful 'Peace Of Mind', the Boston sound, based around the guitar mastery of mainman Tom Scholz, was, and still is, totally unique.

Of course, 'Boston' the album furnished Boston the band with a monster hit on both sides of the Atlantic in the shape of 'More Than A Feeling'; a perfectly weighted piece of pomp wizardry, although its follow-up, 'Long Time', was a little less fortunate.

And for Scholz (who wrote or co-wrote all eight tracks, co-produced and co-engineered the album) Boston quickly became more of a solo project than a band, resulting in a two year wait for 'Don't Look Back' and an incredible eight year gap (a pair of excellent Barry Goudreau albums not withstanding) between that and 'Third Stage'.

But, even after the wait, neither really matched the beauty of 'Boston'.

PAUL MILLER

IRON MAIDEN
'Live After Death'
(EMI RIP I)
Released 1985

Bruce Dickinson (vocals), Dave Murray and Adrian Smith (guitars) Steve Harris (bass), Nicko McBrain (drums)

THE DOUBLE 'Live After Death' gets my vote as Iron Maiden's finest hour – a raunchy and raucous run-through of all the band's classic moments rammed hard down our throats by Martin Birch's colossally crisp production!

'Run To The Hills', 'Running Free', '2 Minutes To Midnight', 'Rime Of The Ancient Mariner' . . . Each and every one of the 17 numbers presented here for your delectation are guaranteed golden nuggets of hard rock, and a perfect display of the way in which Maiden took the essence of their roots (the original giants of rock such as Deep Purple, Led Zeppelin and Golden Earring) and moulded it into their own, unique style.

More brash and aggressive, and reliant on a speedy style that owed something to punk for its bared fangs, 'Live After Death' is as good an example as any of the way Heavy Metal developed in the '80s: less bluesy and more influenced by the industrial landscape of grimy inner city London.

Where many Metal bands struggled to keep a passion and intensity of feeling in amongst all the powerchord riffing, Maiden somehow managed to offset that problem with the very earthiness of their characters.

"The moral of this story is what not to do if a bird shits on you", says Bruce, offsetting the grandiose billiousness of the band's adaptation of a Coleridge poem!

Packaged to perfection with photos and booklets galore, chock-a-block with tasty grooves, it's as good a summing up of where Metal went in the '80s as anything! HOWARD JOHNSON

WHITESNAKE
'Ready An' Willing'
(United Artists UAG 30302)
Released 1980

David Coverdale (vocals), Bernie Marsden and Micky Moody (guitars), Neil Murray (bass), Jon Lord (keyboards), Ian Paice (drums)

JUST SCAN through that line-up and forget the nancyboys of today – this is THE Whitesnake. For me, it's the line-up that will spring first to mind when, in 40 years time, someone says: "Oh, you remember them, do you?"

How would I be able to forget? And how could I have forgotten this album?

Sheer class on every front, 'Ready An' Willing' will stand forever as Coverdale's finest moment and the epitomy of what British rock has ever aspired to.

Marsden and Moody were at their peak here; playing off each other with better rapport than that between Barnes and Beardsley. Jon Lord's midfield support lent itself to the attack and bolstered the centre-backs of Paice and Murray, solid as the day is long.

But this album is more a tribute to Coverdale's lethal finishing. Never in better voice, before *or* since, those bluesy, soulful, searing tones have reduced grown men to tears and dampened a million pairs of knickers.

But even a band who are performing at their peak will produce a naff album if they can't provide *material*. No such worries here: from the opening drone of 'Fool For Your Loving' to the final clicks of the take-out groove following Side Two's last track, 'Woman', 'Ready An' Willing' has nine songs that *defined* what Whitesnake were then (and should be now).

Two tracks in particular, 'Blindman' and 'Ain't Gonna Cry No More', will remain all-time faves of mine.

They illustrate perfectly the depth, colour, ability and *soul* of this band.

A brilliant album.

DAVID GALBRAITH

ZZ TOP
'Eliminator'
(Warner Bros W3774)
Released 1983

Billy Gibbons (guitar/vocals), Dusty Hill (bass/vocals), Frank Beard (drums)

THESE THREE guys had it all: a healthy respect for their blues roots, an instinctive feel for their instruments, and – above all – the priceless ability for writing three-and-a-half minute wonders that could get a dead man tapping his foot.

Although their earlier albums are preferred by purists, on 'Eliminator', these three Texan eccentrics stirred all the above ingredients together into a near perfect cocktail. The secret of this record's success though, was the addition of the last magic "Factor X" . . . a dash of inspired innovation. Yup, the whole concoction amounted to a very heady brew: a recipe for rock in the '80s

So we got synthesised guitars, vocals, keyboards (?), and even drums – rumour has it that Frank Beard played not a beat that wasn't transformed by a Fairlight computer (whatever happened to them?). The whole shebang, superbly produced by long-time Top overseer Bill Ham, dazzled with an ultra hi-tech sheen but still somehow managed to rock out and avoid sounding like any of the synthetic pap that so often clogged up the pop charts.

In fact, ZZ Top went one better. . . they invaded the charts themselves. Three killer videos – all featuring the same enigmatic style and all starring the customised red car that adorned the cover, assorted long-legged lovelies, plus the band themselves in beards (mostly) and boiler suits – took the singles 'Gimme All Your Lovin' ', 'Legs' and 'TV Dinners' into the hearts, souls and dancin' shoes of switched on dudes and dudettes both sides of the Atlantic.

The band became household names and embarked on a hugely successful world tour which stunned everyone with its spectacular and until then little seen (outside of Genesis shows) use of Varilites. Oh, halcyon days. . . but I digress.

This record is still a killer. It stands today as a brilliant, and unrivalled example of ultra modern rock 'n' roll ('n' shuffle-blues-boogie). NEIL JEFFRIES

BLACK SABBATH
'Mob Rules'
(Vertigo 6302 119)
Released 1981

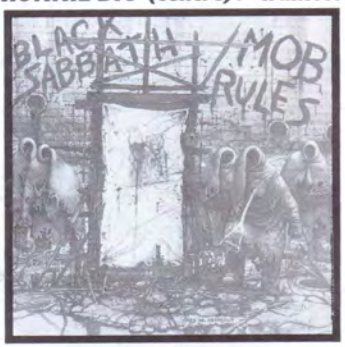
Ronnie James Dio (vocals), Tony Iommi (guitar), Geezer Butler (bass), Vinnie Appice (drums)

BLACK SABBATH are one of the few bands who can genuinely be described in terms of eras. Some people prefer the Ozzy era; I prefer the Dio one.

By a cruel twist of fate, 'Mob

Pic Andy Hanson

RONNIE DIO (centre): 'transforming doomladen riffs into majestic flights of fancy'



Rules' is criminally overshadowed by its prior Sabbath release, the admittedly excellent (but still inferior) 'Heaven And Hell'. Despite that album's commercial success, it was, after all, only the test run for the Dio/Sabbath partnership – 'Mob Rules' is the real thing.

Before, Ronnie was just the 'new' Sabbath vocalist. On this album, rather than try and fit into the Sabbath plan, Dio moulds the band to suit himself. As a result, the album bears the gigantic stamp of Dio's ironically tiny feet. Here Dio is a *singer*, and not just a voice. His lyrics are fresh and original, his imagery is vivid with colour and ideas.

But let's not forget the patent-holder of the modern day guitar riff, professor Tony Iommi, without whom you can safely assume that the Metallicas of modern times would not exist.

Dio transforms Iommi's doom-laden riffs into majestic flights of fancy culminating on peak tracks 'Voodoo' and 'Country Girl' which have yet to be beaten.

On a similar point, it's difficult to accept that the producer responsible for capturing not only the sound but the feel and atmosphere of the band is none other than Martin Birch, who has tried but failed to achieve the same thing for Iron Maiden over the past five years. AL RHODES

MICHAEL BOLTON 'Everybody's Crazy' (Columbia BFC 39328) Released 1985

Michael Bolton (vocals/guitar), Bruce Kulick (guitar), Dennis Feldman (bass), Mark Mangold, Jan Mullaney and Larry Fast (keyboards), Mark Rivers (saxophone)

IT HURTS to admit that everything Derek Oliver ever said about this album is true. It also hurts to recall that this album seems to have only sold around seven copies and is still only available on import. It's painfully ridiculous. Just think of all those tape copies running around the country. I wish CBS would. I wish he'd come play, I wish, I wish, I wish . . .

Judging by *Kerrang!*'s recent wimp poll, this is the one; higher than 'The Hunger', even outstrippng his debut album. For the uninitiated; if you can lay a claim to a copy of this, in any form whatsoever, then do. Lust for it – his voice will crack your spine as simply as a twig snapping.

The title-track, the original US disappear-without-trace single, roars like the late night train thundering into a small coastal town. 'Can't Turn It Off' – let's not state obvious puns here – moves in much the same way; bars being hummed in instant mimicry the second the song is over. 'Call My Name', which – and this gets to me quite badly – was the recent B-side to 'Sittin' On . . .' The song with great sax. (Sorry). But someone, somewhere must have overseen its release, so why not the rest of the bloody thing?

Enough. The glorious 'Desperate Heart', the guitar shaped 'Start Breaking My Heart' (a pulmonary and ventricle man, our Mike), and the positively wonderful, (I'm even starting to sound like Derek – God forbid), 'Don't Tell Me It's Over'. Unfortunately, it is.

I'd say something ridiculous like, "Buy or . . .", but you can't. Write to CBS now. I'm sure they'll have some of the answers.

PHIL WILDING

MAGNUM
'On A Storyteller's Night' (FM/Revolver WKFM LP34) Released 1985

Bob Catley (vocals), Tony Clarkin (guitar), Colin 'Wally' Lowe (bass), Mark Stanway (keyboards), Jim Simpson (drums)

FOR YEARS one of Britain's most enduring and original pomp rock bands, Magnum appeared ready to call it a day after completing their 'Eleventh Hour' album. They lost their record deal, and guitarist Tony Clarkin was forced to take a complete break from music through illness.

But against the odds, Magnum re-invented themselves. Where they had been quirky, sometimes smooth and powerful, sometimes trite and self-indulgent, with 'On A Storyteller's Night' they captured all of their English warmth in a set of songs loaded with melody and character.

'How Far Jerusalem' crackles with mighty drums and a potent, pounding riff, giving Catley the chance to lace Clarkin's evocative lyrics with his own brand of cool vocal power.

'Just Like An Arrow', 'Two Hearts', 'Before First Light' and 'Steal Your Heart' all boast a bounce in their backside, perfect pomp delivered joyously.

'Les Morts Dansant' and the title-track are big production numbers, building slowly, the band proving eloquent storytellers themselves and lending continuity and flow.

'All England's Eyes' cracks out a sharp, gritty riff, 'Endless Love' is pinned down by the massive keyboard sound, and 'The Last Dance' proves a genuinely moving, gentle to be love song.

Despite their recent success they have still to match the simple beauty and the rustic joy of this album – and perhaps they never will. JON HOTTEN

VAN HALEN
'Van Halen 2' (Warner Bros K56616) Released 1979

Dave Lee Roth (vocals), Eddie Van Halen (guitar), Michael Anthony (bass), Alex Van Halen (drums)

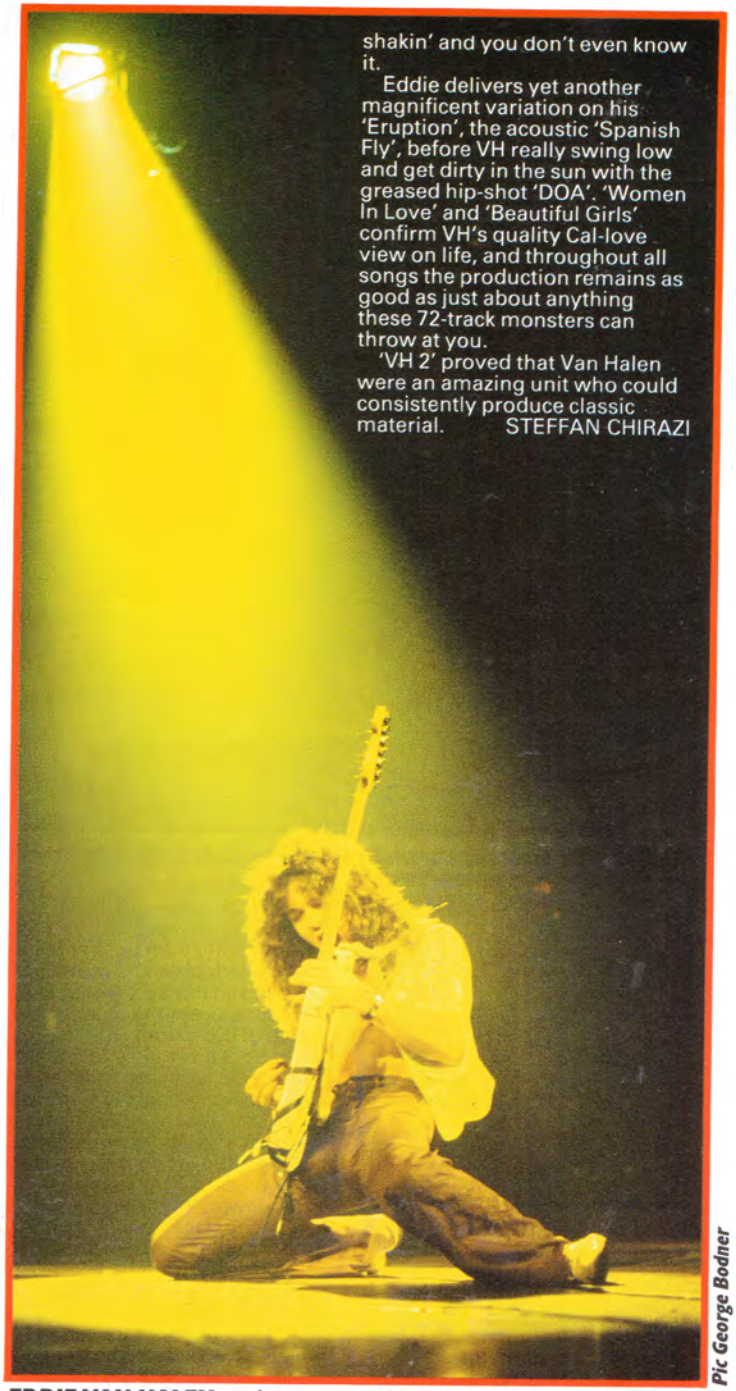
AS IF their first LP didn't blast hard rock's dusty and tired old cobwebs enough, the classic Californian band sat down, screwed around for a while and threw up this gem as a response to their enormous debut album success.

Lazy, casual, rancid with the air of Los Angeles beaches 'n' blondes, 'VH 2' could bring you to the West Coast with a dim light and a loud blast. Diamond Dave saunters through this vinyl with the style and panache that has kept him at the top for all these years, while the actual songs slip off the disc like oil off water.

While Dave croons 'You're No Good' – the album opener – you can just picture Eddie lounging around in some sun spot, shades on, whipping off the odd casual and brilliant lick while Alex and Michael smile, laugh and hit the rhythms. By the time we hit 'Bottoms Up' it all starts to sound so easy, so classy, so superbly relaxed that your hips 'n' hair are shakin' and you don't even know it.

Eddie delivers yet another magnificent variation on his 'Eruption', the acoustic 'Spanish Fly', before VH really swing low and get dirty in the sun with the greased hip-shot 'DOA'. 'Women In Love' and 'Beautiful Girls' confirm VH's quality Cal-love view on life, and throughout all songs the production remains as good as just about anything these 72-track monsters can throw at you.

'VH 2' proved that Van Halen were an amazing unit who could consistently produce classic material. STEFFAN CHIRAZI



Pic George Bodner

EDDIE VAN HALEN: enjoys a second volume of knee-tremblers

DEEP PURPLE 'Made In Japan' (Purple TPSP 351) Released 1972

Ritchie Blackmore (guitar), Ian Gillan (vocals), Roger Glover (bass), Jon Lord (organ/piano), Ian Paice (drums)

THE LIVE double which still convinces me that on their night, no one but no one could touch Deep Purple.

Strangely, it was recorded in August 1972 for the Japanese market only, and only released worldwide following the huge success of its immediate predecessor 'Machine Head' – the LP most featured here.

In fact the four 'MH' songs the band charge through on this set are overflowing with the energy and enthusiasm reserved for new material. For new challenges. The sheer power of That Riff on 'Smoke On The Water', and the inspired-to-the-point-of-perfection Blackmore solo on 'Highway Star' are two of the finest moments in Purple's long career. The whole record, self-produced but engineered by a young Martin Birch, set standards for double lives that have rarely been matched since. However, that's as much a testimony to the band as the recording.

Although they were probably being cautious because the tapes were rolling, the individual performances are nothing less than stunning. Ian Gillan's vocals on 'Child In Time' are among his best ever, Ian Paice never puts a foot (or a stick) wrong in his solo during 'The Mule', and Jon Lord's manic/magic fingerwork in the side-long 'Space Truckin'' inspired the whole band to greater things.

That, after all, was the very essence of Deep Purple: competition and improvisation. Listen to the interplay between Blackmore and Gillan on 'Strange Kind Of Woman', or between Blackmore and Lordy on 'Lazy' for proof.

'Made In Japan' captures a legendary band in full flight. Five spectacular talents jostling for the spotlight with shining results.

NEIL JEFFRIES

Pic Chris Walter

ALICE COOPER: brandishing his billion dollar baby bottle

ALICE COOPER 'Billion Dollar Babies' (Warner Bros K56013) Released 1973

Alice Cooper (vocals), Glen Buxton and Michael Bruce (guitars), Dennis Dunaway (bass), Neil Smith (drums)

MAYBE NOT every 'classic' Cooper fanatic's favourite, yet the definitive Cooper album in terms of money, hits, money, success, money, acclaim and most important of all . . . er . . . money.

In a bulgin' snakeskin-wallet sleeve, the American dream in the shape of a decayin' apple pie is force-fed to the greedy. The horror is the reality, as the lyrics to the title-track splinter bone more effectively than any model guillotine.

"Anti" is cool as it's 'No More Mr Nice Guy' and I wanna be 'Elected'. Alice projects (and occassionally 'sings') with a rottin' passion, loathin' and mockin', while the guitars wail with a preciseness still uniquely 'Billion Dollar Babies' yet questionably totally the work of the band.

Still, the genius of Bob 'sixth member' Ezrin conducts the album into the solid-gold shape that has 'classic' imprinted onto every dollar bill it ever made.

The twisted lullaby of 'Mary Anne' sets you 'somewhere' at ease after the lecherous 'Sick Things' only to find you've been set up for the album's conclusion in the form of 'I Love The Dead'. Although given the album's overall gluttonous concept, you'd be forgiven for misreadin' it 'I Love The Bread'!!!

RAY ZELL

Pic Ross Halfin

***ROB HALFORD** of Judas Priest screams in anguish as the heartless* **Kerrang!** *photo editor plucks dreadful 'Stained Class' era shot from files*

JUDAS PRIEST 'Stained Class' (CBS 82430) Released 1978

Rob Halford (vocals), Glenn Tipton and KK Downing (guitars), Ian Hill (bass), Les Binks (drums)

'STAINED CLASS' was the first Priest album I ever bought. I had heard of the band, read what little appeared in the American press at the time, and searched long and hard for 'Sin After Sin', the album they were promoting at the time.

I never got 'SAS' until later, but I stumbled upon 'Stained Class' in a small shop near my home and brought it over to my friend's house.

Now we had just been coming off the exhilaration of Kiss for two years, our love affair with the band dampened by the cheat of the 'Double Platinum' compilation and the generally thin sound of 'Love Gun' . . .

So when 'Exciter' burst from my friend's fragile stereo speakers, virtually pinning us back against the wall, it was like a rebirth.

We were SAVED by the PRIEST!

Although the production sounds a bit dated today, the songs hold up magnificently. Futuristic laser blasts like 'White Heat, Red Hot', 'Saints In Hell' and the title-track really have no counterpart today, except for the most progressive Speed Metal bands.

Halford took the basic Plant wail and transformed it into a venomous, spitting blowtorch – when he said *'fall to your knees'*, you damn well *did* – while axemen Tipton and Downing cut and slashed all about him sharp as steel.

Priest paved the way for so much to come in the decade after this record was released (check out 'Beyond The Realms Of Death' for the direct ancestor of 'Fade To Black' or 'In My Darkest Hour') that it's a real shame the band have since degenerated so badly in the past four years. I walked out of my friend's house a convert that day, stung by the kiss of Judas.

DON KAYE

***ERIC BLOOM** of Blue Öyster Cult adopts more sensible pose to suit all eras*

BLUE ÖYSTER CULT 'Some Enchanted Evening' (CBS 86074) Released 1978

Eric Bloom (guitar/vocals), Donald 'Buck Dharma' Roeser (guitar/vocals), Allen Lanier (keyboards), Joe Bouchard (bass), Albert Bouchard (drums)

THE CHEER that greets '(Don't Fear) The Reaper' as Buck Dharma flies into the familiar riff is a moment that makes this live album come alive.

If ever a band should be remembered for one song, then BÖC should be more than satisfied with '(Don't Fear) The Reaper'.

'Some Enchanted Evening' catches Blue Öyster Cult in concert at the peak of their space beauty. Its strength lies in the rawness; the ragged, relentless mountain of music. Overdriven and underproduced, it illustrates Blue Öyster Cult's magnetism as

a live act. 'The Reaper' features an extended guitar work-out, devoid of the sugar coating that smoothed out the original on 'Agents Of Fortune'.

'Astronomy' is simply a song that will forever remain. 'Astronomy' is different now. A fourth chord has been added. The famed solos, the mystery and warning in Bloom's lyrics, diluted beyond recognition. Memories indeed.

Elsewhere there are speedball covers of 'Kick Out The Jams' and 'We Gotta Get Out Of This Place', furiously attacked and hurled around by the band's psycho musicianship. 'Godzilla' is heavier than its hero and represents the 'Cult before silliness set in. Just.

Blue Öyster Cult were always one step ahead of the predictable. Never content to rest on a formula, they thrived on diversification. Which is exactly what keeps 'Some Enchanted Evening' fresh and kind of classic.

I would like to be buried with a copy when I grow old and die.

CHRIS WATTS

THIN LIZZY
'Thunder And Lightning'
(Vertigo VERL 3)
Released 1983

Phil Lynott (vocals/bass), John Sykes (guitar), Scott Gorham (guitar), Darren Wharton (keyboards), Brian Downey (drums)

EVEN WHEN the Thin Lizzy split was made official, nobody honestly believed that 'Thunder And Lightning' would be their last studio album. There was always hope of a re-formation even within band members. Then

the tragic death of Phil Lynott ensured it would never happen.

Producing their best album last, Lizzy fulfilled every band's wish by going out on top. Remaining one of the very few names that achieved legendary standing, not only within the Metal ranks, but right across the board.

As one of the pioneers (at least in HM circles) of the now standard twin lead guitar set-up and plunderers of Lynott's Irish roots, Lizzy were musically unique, but will always be most noted for Lynott's lyrical and songwriting genius.

His usually laid back tales of rogues and loneliness are overtaken here by a feverish energy that binds the whole album together. 'Cold Sweat' and the title-track open each side of the record and set the tone as Lizzy's fastest and heaviest numbers ever. The guitars attack but remain melodic, every solo is excellently constructed with consideration to the listener and devoid of ego-mania.

This is the kind of album that remains glued to your record deck for months. AL RHODES

DAVID LEE ROTH
'Eat 'Em And Smile'
(Warner Bros WX56)
Released 1986

David Lee Roth (vocals), Steve Vai (guitar), Billy Sheehan (bass), Gregg Bissonette (drums)

THE ATOMIC punk bocomes the nuclear showman. Rucksack, sketch book 'n' paints in place, our Dave bops boldly through rock's forbidden zone to create pictures in lyrics and sound.

Sure you'd never capture the soul of Van Halen with an undoubted 'supergroup' like Sheehan, Bissonette and a computerised 'Eddie' in the four-dimensional shape of Steve Vai, but with trusty Ted Templeman producin' in wide screen technicolour – then Roth set free in the kitchen to make his own pizza was obviously goin' to be a journey into R-O-C-K extravagance. And if you can't stand the heat . . .

Dave's solo launch pad hints at past glories and strongly suggests future conquests. The 'loose' soundtrack to a film that never was, yet still the soundtrack to a film that might be. It's 'who cares' and 'nothing's impossible' to rock 'n' roll's golden child.

Let's create a mood with 'Ladies Night In Buffalo', loosen-up with 'Goin' Crazy' and lay down a loony-tune collage with 'Big Trouble'.

How can you really pin down a record that explodes into 'big rock' action with the hoarse bawlin' 'n' husky yelps of 'Yankee Rose' and culminates with a tipsy Frank Sinatra cover? But this is Dave's universe and in that universe – 'That's Life'. RAY ZELL

IGGY POP
'Instinct'
(A&M AMA 5198)
Released 1988

Iggy Pop (vocals), Steve Jones (guitars), Seamus Beaghen (keyboards), Leigh Foxx (bass), Paul Garisto (drums)

THE POPPING Iguana chose 'Instinct' to return to the realms of Metal after a momentary

deviance and emerged with venom and energy. He rocked out with class and turned in a new classic.

Not needing much of a 'reappraisal' after only a matter of months since its release, it is, however, worth restating that there's not a filler or duff track among the 10 tracks included on the LP.

With more spite, suss and enthusiasm than many first offerings by bands young enough to be his offspring, Iggy stands proud, bares himself to the world and doesn't pull his punches, musically or lyrically.

No numbskull HM words here. Check out the autobiographical 'Cold Metal'; anthemic stomping 'Power And Fredom'; the uncompromising 'Square Head', and he's not averse to a bit of romance these days either, as shown on 'Strong Girl'.

Steve Jones (ex-Sex Pistols) adds 'rocket fuel' to the songs, producing simple, effective riffing, blissfully free of extended histrionics. Now more of an LA rocker than a London Punk, he's credited for co-writing four of the songs.

Paul Garisto used to be with the Psychedelic Furs and has always been one of my favourite drummers.

The rest of the band I know little about but they're certainly competent enough.

With a raw, almost-live production, 'Instinct' is unmistakably Iggy.

An album to crank up as you key yourself up for a night out on the town.

KATE NISBET

MAGNUM
'Chase The Dragon'
(Jet JETLP 235)
Released 1982

Bob Catley (vocals), Tony Clarkin (guitars), Wally Lowe (bass), Mark Stanway (keyboards), Kex Gorin (drums)

THE FIRST Magnum album I bought, and my all-time favourite elpee. Strange choice? Not to me it aint.

Recorded under the aegis of Jeff Glixman at the Townhouse in London, 'CTD' reigns supreme as Magnum's best Jet Records release and is a classic in its own right, particularly as this is the first champagne opus to include the talents of keyboard maestro Mark Stanway. Although his full contribution to the band's sound had yet to emerge, the opening bars to 'Sacred Hour' are unmistakable and I still wait for them with bated breath every time I see the Brum boys in action.

Also to be found are 'Soldier Of The Line', opening the proceedings with dark, moody splendour, 'The Spirit', flowing along on an impassioned vocal and vibrant guitar, plus 'The Teacher', which romps towards the finale with all the rustic charm and bouyancy that characterised Magnum's early days.

To finish, we get the four minutes 27 seconds of sheer ecstasy that make 'CTD' my definitive choice . . . Dominated by grand piano and string synthesizer, 'The Lights Burned Out' is one of the most beautiful and tragic love songs I have ever heard.

Stunning in its simplicity, this track always leaves me tingling and reaching for the replay button. LYN GUY

VAN HALEN
'1984'
(Warner Bros 92 3985)
Released 1984

Dave Lee Roth (vocals), Eddie Van Halen (guitar), Michael Anthony (bass), Alex Van Halen (drums)

IN SOME respects, this classic Van Halen line-up was as much a heavy rock archetype of their day as Led Zeppelin were of theirs: a flamboyant frontman with a mane of blonde hair and a penchant for posturing, a guitar hero of the first order with tremendous flair and technical skill, a powerhouse drumer rattling around his kit with fury and finesse, a semi-faceless bass player, and a combined musical talent that put most of their contemporaries in the shade.

And nowhere is everything that was Van Halen better represented than on the hard-hitting '1984' – a quite magnificent display of instrumental pyrotechnics harnessed to a collection of eight songs among which there isn't a dud in sight.

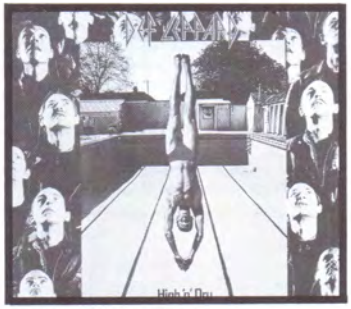
'1984' also marked Van Halen's real 'discovery' of keyboards, pumping out a deep, throbbing bass line from which the hit-single-all-the-way 'Jump' leaped high into the chart, and adding a similarly infectious quality to 'I'll Wait'. And although the success of 'Jump' was nowhere near matched by 'Panama', for my money the latter eclipsed any other heavyweight single released a good couple of years either side of it.

Throughout the rest of the album the songwriting never slackens to more than breaking strain, and the fluid musical dexterity of the brothers Van Halen leaves deep, smouldering tyre-marks criss-crossing the album's varied musical landscape – particularly from the constant gear-shifting delivery of 'Hot For Teacher' and the accelerator-to-the-floor G-force behind 'Girl Gone Bad'.

A remarkable, chromed-steel and spoked-wheel album by a unique band. PAUL HENDERSON

TONY CLARKIN of MAGNUM: in dragon chasing hat

Pic Ray Palmer



DEF LEPPARD
'High & Dry'
(Vertigo 6359 045)
Released 1981

Joe Elliott (vocals), Steve Clark and Pete Willis (guitars), Rick Savage (bass), Rick Allen (drums)

OH NOOOO! Look at Jooooe on the back cover! All dark an' curly-permed – not the blond 'ero of me dreams!

And Sav! Lookin' a mere 12 years old, he too lurks behind a pre-Domestos barnet. I remember t'days . . .

Anyway, 'High & Dry', while never being a 'Pyromania' or 'Hysteria' is a good little album. An' let's face it, anything with 'Bringin' On The Heartbreak' on it can't be bad, can it?!

Still one of the Leps' best ballads, it never fails to bleed for you.

If that's a bit girlie for ya, then flip to 'No No No', probably the heaviest track Leppard have ever done, and a route which, even today, could be further explored. A raw production from 'Mutt' Lange gives this one plenty of power – even coping with Joe's early, gritty vocals.

The title-track and 'You Got Me Runnin'' were primetime Leppard of that era – pacey, bare and crammed full of jangly guitars and anguished vocals. 'Mirror Mirror' and 'Another Hit And Run' also bore the trademarks, but 'Mirror . . .', particularly, went beyond that, almost to the experimental.

It was the Leps' last album with Pete Willis on guitar and his departure (and subsequent replacement by Phil Collen) marked a watershed for the band. They shifted up to fifth gear, prioritised faultless production, delivered 'Pyromania' and won the world.

'High & Dry' was very much the end of era, the close of Chapter One, and it's an album they should never be ashamed of.

ALISON JOY

IRON MAIDEN
'The Number Of The Beast'
(EMI EMC 3400)
Released 1982

Bruce Dickinson (vocals), Adrian Smith and Dave Murray (guitars), Steve Harris (bass), Clive Burr (drums)

IN THE whole Top 100 there were three albums that I considered to be short-straws and this one, Sod's Law as usual, was the top of that tiny list.

Just *what* can I write about this album that you haven't already read more times than those sweet Stryper boys read the Bible?

Should I mention that Martin Birch managed to suck an almost perfect mixture of the simple and the sublime together for the production job?

Do I draw your attention to the fact that this was Bruce Dickinson finding his feet (at the end of short, stocky legs, natch) while Clive Burr was starting to lose his?

Can I point out that, according to the tenets of Wilding's Theory Of Interminable Repetition (to which I subscribe), Maiden have never since come close to making an album that was worth its salt like this one was, despite the subsequent overt and covert attempts at self-plagiarism?

Pic Michael Putland/LFI

DAVE MURRAY of Iron Maiden serenades the Beast

Would it be wise to draw your attention to the fact that Maiden hit mega-chart action with 'Run To The Hills' and the title-track. Or that, even at the time of writing, some six years after release, the Fame label re-release album stands high in the regular *Kerrang!* weekly album chart and looks set to stay in the Top 50 for the future *ad infinitum*?

Could I speculate that without this album, far from being the biggest band in the UK and one of the biggest *anywhere*, Maiden would have done a Pan Tang and slipped into obscurity?

Dunno. Can't think of *anything* to say on this one . . .

DAVID GALBRAITH

JUDAS PRIEST
'Unleashed In The East'
(CBS 83852)
Released 1979

Rob Halford (vocals), Glenn Tipton and K K Downing (guitars), Ian Hill (bass), Les Binks (drums)

GUITARS CUTTING deep like Ben Elton on speed, Halford in untouchable form; 'Unleashed In The East', for me at least, is not only the greatest live album ever released but also the greatest *album* ever released. Period.

Although cruelly labelled "Unleashed In The Studio" by those jealous of its near-perfect sound quality, it nevertheless captures a band, the epitome of Heavy Metal, at their absolute peak, dishing out the kind of emotive Metal classics unequalled since.

Most of the definitive Priest tunes are stockpiled on 'Unleashed . . .', running the gamut of just about every human emotion. A flick of the stylus gives you the full-throated roar of set opener 'Exciter', the full-Metal strut of 'Sinner', the ever-controversial 'Ripper'and Fleetwood Mac's 'Green Manalishi'.

However, the stand out cut is the seven minute stormer 'Victim Of Changes', a vicious onslaught that tempers some quintessential Priest riffing with deliciously delicate balladic sections before biting down hard for a truly furious finale. Culled from the 'Sad Wings Of Destiny' album *waaay* back in 1976, it has stood the test of time and still provides the backbone in the current set.

Now, that's what I call music.

PAUL MILLER

Pic Barry Levine/LFI

ANGEL: 'poetry . . . majesty . . . and soaring vocal gymnastics'

ANGEL
'Angel'
(Casablanca NBLP 7015)
Released 1975

Frank Dimino (vocals), Punky Meadows (guitar), Gregg Giuffria (keyboards), Barry Brandt (drums), Mickey Jones (bass)

WITHOUT A doubt my personal favourite album of all time, from a band that never achieved the success their talent deserved, either because of frequent record company intervention into their creative side or by gross mismanagement.

'Angel' shows the band at their pure, untouched best. It owes much to the influences of legends like Yes, Deep Purple and ELP, yet is still considered by many to be the perfect example of American Pomp Metal.

By the time Angel had been discovered by Kiss's Gene Simmons in a Washington DC club and snapped up by Casablanca, the quintet had long paid their dues in a bunch of nowhere bands.

The musical chemistry of these five guys was, at this early stage of the game, simply wonderful, producing glorious moments of hard rock ecstacy at every turn.

'Angel' is an album chock-a-block full with enough hooks, riffs, soaring vocal gymnastics and mythical lyrical concepts to last the listener a lifetime. Hear and believe the magnificent 'The Tower', the progressive majesty of 'Sunday Morning' and the sheer poetry of the nautical ballad 'The Mariner'. Oh, and let's not forget Angel's first tacky attempt at a party anthem, 'Rock 'N' Rollers', either!

This, and its follow-up 'Helluva Band', released a year later, set music fans' juices flowing all across the States, leading to Angel winning *Circus* magazine's 'Best New Group of 1976' award over Boston and Heart. From then on, however, it was all downhill.

A classic case of a band being much too far ahead of its time.

DAVE REYNOLDS

BLUE ÖYSTER CULT
'Agents Of Fortune'
(CBS 81385)
Released 1976

Albert Bouchard (drums/vokals), Eric Bloom (lead vokals/guitar), Joe Bouchard (bass/vokals), Allen Lanier (keyboards/vokals), Donald Roeser (guitar/vokals)

I STILL konsider BÖC's 'Agents Of Fortune' to be perhaps the greatest Heavy Metal album of all time, mainly for its INTELLIGENCE. BÖC have always gone where no band have dared to tread – mainly 'The Twilight Zone', and by that I mean, the DARK SIDE OF LIFE, indeed rumour has it that the fab '(Don't Fear) The Reaper' was written when Buck Dharma was on his Death Bed, suffering from an inkurable disease (slow death immense dekay). But after writing the toon, inspired by the Byrds by the way, he mirakulosly rekovered . . .

Most of the Kult's best lyriks were penned either by Richard Meltzer or Albert Bouchard who of kourse is no longer a member, he left the band during their stale period – 1982/3.

Now then, back to 'Agents . . .', what kan be said about this klassik that already hasn't, well how about RIFFS, RIFFS and yet more RIFFS, listen to the amazing 'This Ain't The Summer Of Love', the RIFFS just build and build, and never seem to end. 'True Confessions' meanwhile is far more poppy and up tempo, which is an ultimate tease, for the aforementioned '(Don't Fear) The Reaper', a wonderful song that was a smash hit world wide.

Then of kourse there's 'E.T.I.', komplete with Joe Walsh style talk back guitar, and just for fun, why not get someone wakky like Patti Smith to guest on 'The Revenge Of Vera Gemini'.

'Morning Final', meanwhile shows a more sensitive side to the Kult, Joe Bouchard's moving tale about some dude who komes to a stikky end via the New York Subway – nuff said. I kould go on for page after page, but I won't. Just buy the album and see for yourself. XAVIER RUSSELL

MC5
'Kick Out The Jams'
(Elektra K 42027)
Released 1969

Rob Tyner (vocals), Wayne Kramer (Fender guitar), Fred 'Sonic' Smith (Mosrite guitar), Michael Davis (Fender bass), Dennis Thompson (drums)

IT'S STAGGERIN' to think that 'Kick Out The Jams' was originally recorded over 20 years ago. But wouldja believe that this record *still* has no equal in the annals of Metal?

'KOTJ' is an unbelievably immense vinyl representation of a killer two-nite performance wot took place at Detroit's Grande Ballroom on the 'Zenta New Year', October 30-31, 1968.

The Motor City Five were a bunch of oily-faced geeks from Garageland, USA, fronted by the curly-haired, gap-toothed 'n' bespectacled Rob Tyner, and featuring the twin stun guitar assault of Wayne Kramer (YEAH!) and Fred 'Sonic' Smith (double-YEAH!).

And listening to this album today *still* sends the ol' backbone a-buzzin', the vertebrae vibratin' 'n' the spine sizzlin'.

The LP opens with an over the top political rap and then steams into 'Ramblin' Rose', the band shambolic but sensational, Tyner adopting a ridiculous Tiny Tim singing style, and the whole captivatin' caboodle burrowing into your cerebellum with the tenacity of 10,000 termites.

Next up the title-track kicks into gear, Tyner vocalisin' rather more sensibly now, followed by the heavy duty hippydom of 'Come Together' and the blathering brilliance of 'Rocket Reducer No. 62 (Rama Lama Fa Fa Fa)'.

Flip the sucker over and you get two-and-a-half minutes of flamethrower freneticism in 'Borderline', the megalithic blooze toon 'Motor City Is Burning', the pleadin', teazin' 'I Want You Right Now', and epic LP closer 'Starship'.

When I die, I would like my body to be melted down and recycled as copies of 'Kick Out The Jams'. Only then could I enjoy true contentment in the Afterlife. GEOFF BARTON

Pic SKR Photos International

ROB TYNER of the MC5 perfects his Liberace impersonation

IGGY POP AND THE STOOGES
'Raw Power'
(CBS Embassy 31464)
Released 1973

Iggy Pop (lead vocals), James Williamson (guitars), Ron Asheton (bass), Scott Asheton (drums)

I WAS 15 when I first bought 'Raw Power'. It didn't change my life exactly, but it sure changed the way I looked at everybody else's lives. I used to sit in my room at night, in the dark, playing with a knife while I listened to it.

Later, I got wise and I swapped the knife for a bottle, but I never did get around to switching on the lights when it got dark.

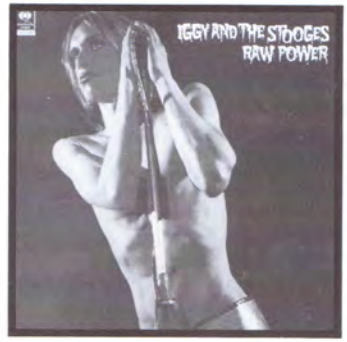
I admired Iggy and the Stooges because they were hated and loathed by their peers and because they could instill real fear in their audience. They were young decadents who reeked of the gutter, slime artists who could barely control their instruments let alone their lives.

But lock them up in a studio, or hang them on a stage, and these mama-jammers burned like human sacrifices, baby . . . Riffs? You didn't talk f**king *riffs* when it came to the Stooges – you talked dirt, you talked street or you didn't talk at all.

No one's managed yet to even come close to the moon-struck, psychopathic raunch of 'Shake Appeal', 'Death Trip', 'Your Pretty Face Is Going To Hell', or any of the other vicious, long-tailed monsters on this album.

Abysmally produced by David Bowie but still one of the bloodiest, heaviest, *and* sexiest rock 'n' roll albums ever made . . .

MICK WALL



TED NUGENT
'Ted Nugent'
(Epic EPC 81196)
Released 1975

Ted Nugent (guitar), Derek St Holmes (vocals/guitar), Rob Grange (bass), Cliff Davies (drums)

ONE GUITAR, eight Fender speaker cabinets and no bullshit. The culmination of the nutter's campaign of world terror began and terminated with this, his debut album for Epic.

We'd heard about the nutter before but up until this time his bark had always been bigger than his bite. Yet with Tom Werman in the production seat here, the magic touch was never more than a beat away. Combining searing hyper energy and venomous guitar with the healthy obsession of a slashing psychopath, Ted somehow brought respectability to complete and utter mayhem.

Non-stop melted down Heavy got dark.

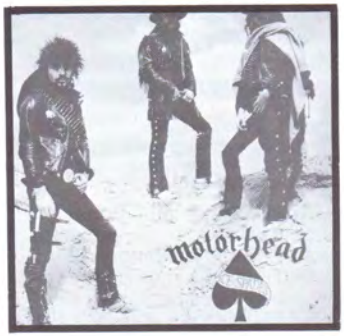
I admired Iggy and the Stooges because they were hated and

Metal with screaming vocals; that's all it really boils down to.

'Stormtroopin'', the interminably long and winding jack-booted stomper and 'Motorcity Madhouse' were king cuts, riding high above the short sharp rockers like 'Snakeskin Cowboys' and 'Hey Baby'. The real juice on the loose, though, happened to be the eight minute epic 'Stranglehold', a creeping death rocker allowing Ted to slip into serious fire breathing, torturing terse licks and weird blips from his Gibson Firebird as if his life depended on it.

Ted visited the UK several times, played some flawless gigs and continued to issue a string of highly gruesome records. Recently he has fallen on hard times, new releases are stiff and anonymous. Sad but true so I leave you with an old quote: "The public are fed up with bullshit. They want the real thing and I'm qualified to give it to 'em better than anybody else around. Rock 'n' roll is not a mind expander, it's a pants expander!"

DEREK OLIVER



MOTÖRHEAD
'Ace Of Spades'
(Bronze BRON 531)
Released 1980

Lemmy (bass/vocals), 'Fast' Eddie Clarke (guitar), 'Philthy Animal' Taylor (drums)

WHERE THE crossover really was starting to happen. Punk's filthy disregard and the rich vein of real rock 'n' roll talent fused together on what is still a glorious high point in my album collection and in life generally.

'Ace Of Spades' did things to my system that have shaped my life. While 'Overkill' and 'Bomber' got me interested, 'Ace Of Spades' convinced me that this whole damn business was where it was at.

I really felt that I'd encountered a life-changing experience and my Adidas tennis racket suddenly became a Rickenbacker 4001.

MOTÖR HEAD: three jokers with an ace album

The title-track is an immortal classic. To this day my nose wrinkles aggressively and my nostalgia floods as Lemmy spits, *'That's the way I like it baby, I don't wanna live forever!'*

'Live To Win', Lem's bass sounding like a squadron of hummingbirds, Philthy hooligan killing all skins in sight, Eddie riffing and picking off the tunes, then Lemmy's gravel-voice growling beneath it all. 'Jailbait', possibly the greatest hard rock song of all time, swagger and filth, 'Chase Is Better Than The Catch' a glorious stride through the dusty streets of Notting Hill Gate. What can I say?

Just like Deep Purple and Led Zeppelin, Motörhead too are our British heritage. 'Ace Of Spades' captures a whole era when mean was mean, tough was tough and tasty hard rock 'n' roll was . . . Well, you get it. A timeless classic.

STEFFAN CHIRAZI

BLACK SABBATH
'Sabotage'
(Nems 9119 001)
Released 1975

Ozzy Osbourne (vocals), Tony Iommi (guitars), Geezer Butler (bass), Bill Ward (drums), no one owned up to playing synthesisers

PLACE STYLUS at start of Side One. Adjust volume to make voices on intro grooves clearly audible. Call glazier to replace windows shattered by the riff to opener 'Hole In The Sky'.

During the subsequent 50 second acoustic Spanish guitar interlude ('Don't Start (Too Late)'), crawl back to stereo, twist volume knob to 11. Now check savings for funds to replace hi-fi equipment destroyed by 'Symptom Of The Universe'.

I never *did* hear two more powerful openers than these, and believe me, they work at any volume.

Strange then that Black Sabbath themselves never really rated this album – although I seem to recall that Ozzy spent the entire '70s decrying the latest LP, promising the next one would be a really heavy, back-to-basics job . . .

'Sabotage' began as just that. A reaction to, as Ozzy put it, "f**kin' about like brain surgeons on a 32-track machine" for 'Sabbath Bloody Sabbath'. And although even this album did get 'neurological' at times – with keyboards, over-overdubs, and a guest appearance by the English Chamber Choir – it became, and remains, the most consistent Sabs album since the early works.

This despite its incredible range of material: from the aforementioned openers, through the 'epics' 'Megalomania' and 'The Writ', to the off-the-wall craziness of the single 'Am I Going Insane (Radio)'.

Black Sabbath never did get back to basis, and their scalpels were never this sharp again, but at least they left us 'Sabotage' to re-arrange our grey matter. No anaesthetic required.

NEIL JEFFRIES

UFO
'Obsession'
(Chrysalis CDL 1182)
Released 1978

Phil Mogg (vocals), Pete Way (bass), Andy Parker (drums), Paul Raymond (keyboards), Michael Schenker (guitar)

THE UNPREDICTABLE, sometimes explosive partnership between Mogg, Way and the young Schenker gave us something, preserved for posterity on 'Obsession'. Something the band later lost and failed to capture on any LP by any of the subsequent incarnations.

Maybe they sobered up.

For its depth of mood, from the pole-axing pyrotechnics of 'Hot 'N' Ready' to the brief, lilting shades of 'Arbory Hill', 'Obsession' has yet to be equalled.

Tapping into a broad base of melody and muscle, UFO could turn circles in any direction and avoid the obvious, average and the mundane.

To select one particular track is impossible.

Whether it be the beautifully hesitant, restrained 'Cherry', the anger of 'You Don't Fool Me' or the flurries of guitar that decorate the entire album, whether it be Mogg's lyrics or Schenker's melody, 'Obsession' still stands tall.

Phil Mogg, in his role of wandering folk rogue, stamped his melancholic mark across the likes of 'Born To Lose' and 'Looking Out For No. 1', aided by Schenker's most heartfelt guitar work to date.

'Born To Lose' in particular, together with 'Try Me' from the 'Lights Out' set, remain the mad German boy's epitaph and have gone down in history as moments of genius.

Interspersing such moments with full-throttle Rock – 'Only You Can Rock Me', 'Hot 'N' Ready' and 'Pack It Up (And Go)' – UFO had an identity that was both moving and universal.

'Obsessions' was the sound of a band at the very top of the tree.

CHRIS WATTS

Pic Alan Messer

IGGY POP: 'spitting out lyrics like broken teeth'

IGGY POP AND THE STOOGES
'Funhouse'
(Elektra EKS 74071)
Released 1970

Iggy Pop (vocals), Dave Alexander (bass), Ron Asheton (guitar), Scott Asheton (drums), Steven MacKay (tenor saxophone)

IF THERE is one album that I would allow to be placed in the coffin next to me before they rolled my wagon down the rails into the cleansing flames of eternity, then this, O Lord, is the one.

From the moment it crept like a sick cat into my outstretched arms when I was 15, it has dominated that ugly part of my soul still addicted to the second-hand love of rock 'n' roll.

Badder than the Stones, more subversive than Zeppelin, with an appetite for destruction that makes the likes of the Sex Pistols, Guns N' Roses and Metallica look like innocent bystanders, and with no more idea or experience of 'melody' or 'harmony' than an enraged bull has of the price of china, the Stooges were every right-thinking person's worst nightmare come to life in hideous, flesh-crawling 3D.

'Funhouse' was their second album, and remains their greatest recorded achievement; their ultimate statement laid down in a way no other rock band before or since has shown the nerve, the vision, or even the desire to try and equal.

The Stooges specialised in vicious nail-the-f**ker-down two-chord riffs, with the lyrics spat out of Iggy's mouth like broken teeth, howling like a young wolf with its balls caught in the hunter's trap.

The first three tracks on Side One – 'Down On The Street', 'Loose' and 'TV Eye' – all incorporate the same droning f**k-you riff. 'Dirt', which closes the side, is that riff again slowed down.

'1970' and 'Funhouse', on Side Two, are the same dumb riff yet again, only played backwards this time. And the last track, 'LA Blues' has no riff at all. Just a noise like the end of the world. . .

MICK WALL

BON JOVI
'Bon Jovi'
(Mercury 814 982-1)
Released 1984

Jon Bon Jovi (vocals), Richie Sambora (guitar), David Rashbaum (keyboards), Alec Jon Such (bass), Tico Torres (drums)

THE FIRST time I heard this record I thought it sounded pretty damn fine. It became an idle curiosity of mine for at least a month or so before a few other folk started to praise it to high heaven. Yeah, I'll go along with 'em, I thought, but hey, it aint half as good as 'Makin' The Point', the final Frankie And The Knockouts LP (for whom Tico Torres played drums).

Y'know it's five years since this ablum was released and, in my funny old way, I still firmly believe that assessment to be quite true. It is, however, without much doubt, my favourite Bon Jovi record. Why? Well, the answer is simple. Jon Bongiovi (nephew, I believe, of co-producer Tony Bongiovi, so don't give me that bullshit about how Jon was a hungry kid without connections) was out to make an impact. It is obvious that the record company had little formal input, and here we find the band in all their magnificent raw glory.

Side One contains the best songs – 'Runaway' and 'She Don't Know Me' for example, the latter written by Mark Avsec. Perhaps the best known track is 'Shot Through The Heart' a song co-penned by Jack Ponti, an old New Jersey sparring chum of Jon's.

A good album for sure, complete with an interesting croaky vocal performance from Jon which suggested, without the benefit of hindsight, that he could barely sing a decent melody, let alone score a Number One hit album!

Welcome to the world of platinum AOR, where of course this record has become the blueprint for countless imitations.

DEREK OLIVER

BON JOVI: debut album a blueprint for countless imitations

BLACK SABBATH
'Master Of Reality'
(Nems NEL 6004)
Released 1971

Ozzy Osbourne (vocals), Tony Iommi (guitar), Terry "Geezer" Butler (bass), Bill Ward (drums)

THE TONE. My God! Do you hear it! Listen. . . there it is: The *guitar* TONE, perfected by Tony (no pun intended) Iommi on Black Sabbath's third album, 'Master Of Reality'.

The album opens with Ozzy coughing up phlegm in preparation for his vocal tracks and then the guitar comes in, the dirtiest, fuzziest, grungiest guitar ever known to man.

FFFZZZRRRUUUMMMZZZZ!!!

'Master Of Reality' is not much of an album length-wise; six songs and two short acoustic instrumentals. But what quality!

First track, 'Sweet Leaf', is of course the splif-smoker's anthem, while 'After Forever' with its born-again ramblings packs more punch in one note than Stryper could muster in 20 of their albums.

Then the apocalyptic 'Children Of The Grave', with its frightening fade-out and Ozzy's whispers of doom.

Flip it over and there's 'Lord Of This World', more disgusting, dripping chords and even the bass is starting to sound polluted and swollen.

Then a reprieve for just a few moments, in the eerie, quietly despairing 'Solitude'; if that's Ozzy singing, it's still his most unusual vocal ever.

But 'Solitude' misleads you. For no sooner does it end than you're sucked, screaming, 'Into The Void'.

It's one of the heaviest songs ever committed to vinyl, with a riff that paralyzes you and turns you into smouldering, shapeless jelly under its monolithic, consuming power.

Ah, good music like this is such bliss . . .

DON KAYE

AEROSMITH
'Toys In The Attic'
(CBS 80773)
Released 1975

Steven Tyler (vocals), Joe Perry (guitar), Brad Whitford (guitar), Joey Kramer (drums), Tom Hamilton (bass)

'TOYS IN The Attic' is often hailed as the band's finest hour, possibly because it spawned the hit single 'Walk This Way', a track that was later to become a hit a second time around in the hands of rap act Run DMC. This highlighted the fact that behind Aerosmith's sleazy Rolling Stones-ish swagger lay a black, funky influence.

But 'Toys . . .', like all 'Smith albums, wasn't simply about one song. Nope, Aerosmith had smashes by the ton – once played, never forgotten.

AEROSMITH: no junk hidden in their attics

They come at you like a pack of hounds right from the off with the fast movin', all-action title-track, riding on a wave of sound with Tyler on a roll out front on vocals and scarved mike stand.

'Uncle Salty' and 'Adam's Apple' quickly follow the breathless opener, both featuring off-the-wall lyrics, the latter taking on a cheeky biblical feel and capturing Joe Perry's probing guitar and Kramer's colourful and original drum patterns perfectly. This was the period during which Jack Douglas reigned supreme as king of the production desk.

Always provocative and 'licensed to shock', 'Smith topped off the first side with the once-banned doo-wop classic 'Big Ten Inch Record'.

Groupie tricks and an on-the-road fix of what you fancy surround 'Sweet Emotion', a live favourite ever since, and 'No More No More', with the mystical, sometimes menacing riffs of 'Round And Round' following up. 'You See Me Crying', an extremely emotional ballad, ends Side Two of just one aural chapter in Aerosmith's long, crazy history.

DAVE REYNOLDS

MOTT THE HOOPLE
'Live'
(CBS 69093)
Released 1974

Ian Hunter (vocals/guitar), Ariel Bender (guitar), Overend Watts (bass), Morgan Fisher (keyboards), Buffin (drums)

NOW THIS really *is* a live mutha! Side One at the Uris Theatre Broadway (Mott bein' the first rock band to 'kick some' there!), Side Two at good ol' Hammy Odeon.

Featurin' my fave Mott line-up, with "Aaariel Benndahhh" on somethin' nowhere even close to resemblin' a 'musical instrument'!

His bully-beef almost bozo/gonzo 'guitar' is a wild thing unleashed!

Witness his arrival on the openin' track 'All The Way From Memphis' – he may as well have hit the audience over the head with a shovel!

And 'Walking With A Mountain' just *kerr*-runches anythin' dumb enough to get in its locomotive path, ever threatenin' to leave an exhausted Ian Hunter trailin'!

But it's the Hammy Odeon side where the sheer loutish, rabble-rousin' character of Ian And The Herefordshire Hooligans almost, but *only* almost, succeed in suffocatin' the music. Loud, brash, charismatic and riotous – close yer peepers an' ya really can sense the buzz an' whiff the sweat-stained leathers 'n' stale cigarette smoke.

This record actually does capture the 'expect the unexpected', electric live essence of a rock 'n' roll gig.

Ian Dury was once asked what he made of lunatic punk audiences, to which he replied: "After supportin' Mott The Hoople – this is toytown!"

Hmmm.

Strange that space cadet Zell should appreciate anythin' so genuine?

Maybe I'm just genuinely strange.

RAY ZELL

THIN LIZZY
'Live And Dangerous'
(Vertigo 6641 807)
Released 1978

Phil Lynott (vocals/bass), Brian Robertson and Scott Gorham (guitars), Brian Downey (drums)

CONSIDERING THE awe-inspiring number of live double albums that have been foisted on the public over the decades, it is rare to come across one that really justifies its existence in anything other than purely commercial terms.

'Live And Dangerous', however, is one of those honourable exceptions to the rule; a live double album that so convincingly highlights a band at the very peak of its powers, it can be looked back on as one of the definitive recordings of that band's career.

Featuring the classic Lizzy line-up that included Brian Robertson on guitar, and recorded at the height of their fame – half in London in '76 and half in Toronto a year later – listening to 'Live And Dangerous' was as close as you could humanly get to actually being there at a Thin Lizzy show without buying a ticket.

Of all 17 tracks included here – from the rangey, smooth-talkin' raunch of pencil-thin groovers like 'Jailbreak', 'Rosalie', 'Cowboy Song', 'The Boys Are Back In Town' or 'The Rocker', to mention a mere handful, to the brooding cat-calling blues of the album's most shimmering moment, 'Still In Love With You', featuring *that* guitar solo from Robbo – there isn't one that doesn't beat hell out of their original recordings.

How many so-called 'live' albums can you honestly say that about?

MICK WALL

PHIL LYNOTT: pic Fin Costello

BRYAN ADAMS
'Reckless'
(A&M AMA 5013)
Released 1985

Bryan Adams (guitar/vocals), Keith Scott (guitar), Dave Taylor (bass), Tommy Mandel (keyboards), Mickey Curry and Pat Steward (drums)

QUITE WHY it took until 1985's 'Reckless' for Bryan Adams to get a record in either the British singles or albums charts is to me a complete mystery.

Though the Canadian rocker's first album, 'Bryan Adams', was not released in Britain, with 'Cuts Like A Knife', his criminally overlooked (at least until *after* 'Reckless') third album in particular, it was obvious that Adams was not just the latest young gun with a big mouth.

Clearly songwriting for him was far more than a case of just slinging together a few half-assed chords and flatulent choruses, then wrapping the resulting garbage in a convenient 'image' to make it sell.

The words 'passionate' and 'emotive' are ones that slip easily into descriptions of Adams' music, and on 'Reckless' those two qualities, openly evident both musically and lyrically on such as 'Summer Of '69', 'Run To You' and 'Somebody' – and perhaps in slightly more subtle fashion on 'Kids Wanna Rock' and 'One Night Love Affair' – finally pressed home the message that here was a guy with a guitar and an ability to construct songs.

The songs, written here with writing partner Jim Vallance, were the kind that if you opened up and let them in, could make your head spin . . .

And when the stunning collection of songs on 'Reckless' are also played by the calibre of musicians that Adams has collected in his band, it takes no need at all for imagination to understand why 'Reckless' gained the top slot in the *Kerrang!* writers' poll of that year.

PAUL HENDERSON

BLACK SABBATH
'Vol 4'
(Nems NEL 6005)
Released 1972

Ozzy Osbourne (vocals), Geezer Butler (bass), Tony Iommi (guitar), Bill Ward (drums)

WITHIN THE space of two-and-a-half years, Black Sabbath released four classic albums; 'Black Sabbath', 'Paranoid', 'Master Of Reality' and 'Vol 4', with the latter being perhaps the finest of them all.

By the time they came to record this, Sabbath had matured – still retaining their elemental menace, but adding a deft touch to the iron fist songwriting and a realisation of the extra dimension the studio could add.

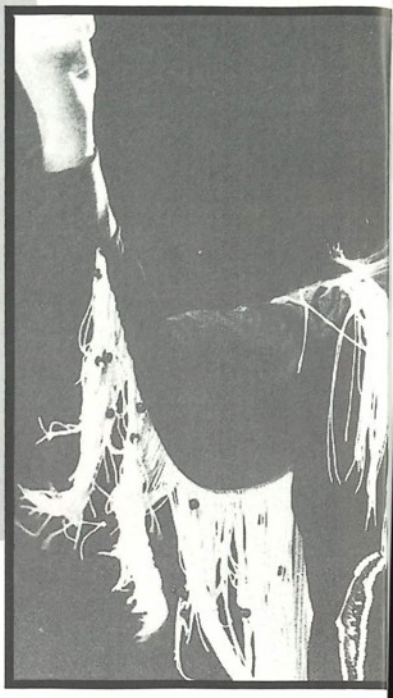
'Wheels Of Confusion' is typical of Sabbath in their monumental hey-day – eight minutes of a turbulent, rolling riff, mind-blowingly heavy and packed with dense power, and Ozzy giving it loads over the top.

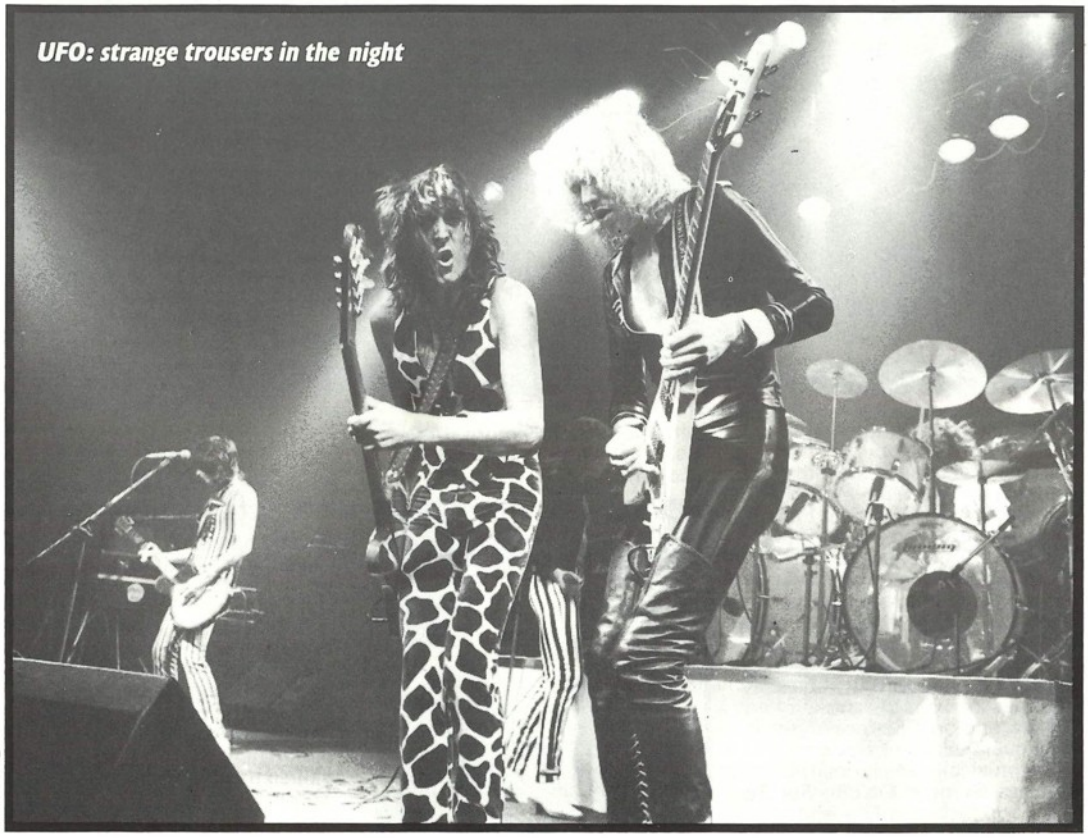
'Tomorrow's Dream' is a blast by comparison, so the band limit themselves to a three-minute jaunt through yet another clever and inventive Iommi riff.

It could be argued that, aside from the magical chemistry the four members created between them, it is Iommi's genius for riff and songwriting that made Sabbath the greatest Heavy Metal band of all time.

On 'Vol 4' alone, the bubbling 'Supernaut', the bite of 'Under The Sun', the steaming 'St Vitus Dance' and the bleak but blistering panoramas of 'Snowblind' and 'Cornucopia' are witness to the fact.

Even the hilarious 'Changes', in which Ozzy attempts to sing a ballad, somehow adds to the character and overall power and impact. By now an unstoppable and vital force, Sabbath's ascent to the level of rock legends was nearly complete. JON HOTTEN





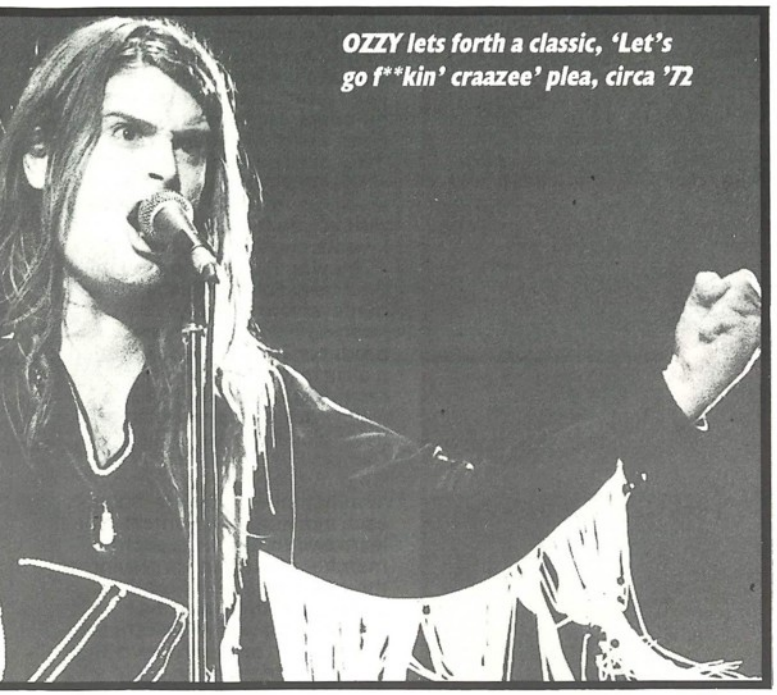
UFO: strange trousers in the night

Pic George Bodnar

UFO
'Strangers In The Night'
(Chrysalis CJT 5)
Released 1978

Phil Mogg (vocals), Pete Way (bass), Michael Schenker (guitar), Paul Raymond (guitar/keyboards), Andy Parker (drums)

IT WAS a shame to witness the way in which things went downhill for UFO once they'd kicked their temperamental Teutonic Michael Schenker into



OZZY lets forth a classic, 'Let's go f**kin' craazee' plea, circa '72

touch. Despite his unpredictability (immense binges and head-shaving escapades!), Schenker really was the lynchpin of the band, and once he'd departed from the ranks the spirit of the band simply dwindled.

Still, at least we're left with the double live legacy of 'Strangers. . .', a quite superb demonstration of just how exhilarating the band could be.

UFO came from an era when a keen ear for melody didn't automatically signify that the band would be AOR pap. As such, what you get here is a stunning collection of tasteful hard rock, ranging from the full heads-down artillery of 'Doctor Doctor' and 'This Kid's' to the more sensitive yet no less effective likes of 'Love To Love' and 'Out In The Street'.

With Phil Mogg leading the charge from the front with a refreshingly non-histrionic approach to hard rock vocalising, UFO always had that little bit of extra class which set them apart from the competition. And of course, as seems to be the way with most hard rock acts, the band always excelled live.

That's why 'Strangers. . .' is such a definitive collection of the UFO sound. They never quite seemed to capture the intensity of their live performances on record and the band's studio albums do sound a touch dated these days. No such problem here though, where Ron Nevison allows Schenker's axework to fly clear and free. When the man was on song, believe me, there was no one better!

HOWARD JOHNSON

JUDAS PRIEST
'Screaming For Vengeance'
(CBS 85941)
Released 1982

Rob Halford (vocals), Glenn Tipton and KK Downing (guitars), Ian Hill (bass), Dave Holland (drums)

IT'S A fine line between love and hate true enough, and even now, umpteen albums into their career, Judas Priest are still an acquired taste. I love this album for all the wrong reasons too,

being attracted primarily by what remains one of the most original album covers to date. That was before I realised Halford was a demi-god and not a camped-up leather clad buffoon(!), and that lyrics like, '*You bring me pain but you give me pleasure, don't know what I like*' and '*Feast your eyes on a whole lotta sin*' were not actually serious.

Judas Priest are precisely what Heavy Metal is supposedly all about – screaming guitars, screaming vocalist, having an attitude . . .

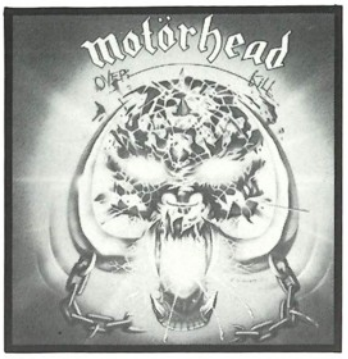
No one writes anthems like these guys, and 'Screaming For Vengeance' and 'You've Got Another Thing Comin'' are classic examples.

Undeniably, Priest have excelled 'SFV' musically on other albums, but this is the single record that not only sums up what is so brilliant about Priest but also forms the template for countless bands to follow. Just as Halford's voice and vocal style have been the mould for talents such as Geoff Tate – if not his sense of humour. AL RHODES

MOTORHEAD
'Overkill'
(Bronze BRON 515)
Released 1979

Lemmy (bass/vocals), 'Fast' Eddie Clarke (guitar), 'Philthy Animal' Taylor (drums)

ONLY VERY rarely is an album released which can genuinely be called a milestone. One which stands tall along a road littered with the corpses of also-rans. 'Overkill' is such an album.



It broke down barriers and crashed in head first where others were afraid to look, let alone tread. Old Metal acts had been this heavy, Punks had been this irreverent, but nobody had put the two together so convincingly. 'Overkill' set new standards.

And the bonus is that it is actually a cracker by *any* standards. Although die-hard purists might prefer the Chiswick Records debut, that was too poorly produced to compare with this one (take a bow Jimmy Miller). No subsequent Motörhead album has been this consistent or original. Some were better in parts perhaps, but none avoided the trap of 're-writing' numbers first aired here.

Not that 'Overkill' itself is free of plagiarism – 'No Class' owes more than a drink to ZZ Top's 'Tush' and several songs offer echoes of Lemmy's earlier days in Hawkwind. But no matter, this album was written in Motörhead's natural habitat – on the road – and it shows. 'Stay Clean', 'Damage Case', 'Tear Ya Down' and 'I'll Be Your Sister' are all primed to crack skulls and blow speakers.

Yet at the end of the day this will be remembered most for its definitive title-track. Philthy's double bass drums thunder out like a buffalo stampede, Lemmy's bass joins in to speed the gallop, then Eddie's guitar scythes down the stragglers before the immortal line, *'Only way to feel the noise is when it's good and loud. . .'*

Do I really need to say more?

NEIL JEFFRIES

BON JOVI
'Slippery When Wet'
(Vertigo VERH 38)
Released 1986

Jon Bon Jovi (vocals), Richie Sambora (guitar), Alec Jon Such (bass), Dave Bryan (keyboards), Tico Torres (drums)

AHA! THE album that promoted sales of baby oil worldwide!

But despite bein' Slippery With Innuendo, 'SWW' was undoubtedly the LP that stuck Jon Bon Jovi's little ass firmly on the top of the platinum Christmas tree (ouch!).

An' the pressure was well and truly on them after the critical indifference to '7800° Fahrenheit', but they delivered their next vinyl offspring like proud fathers; glowing, beaming and boastful.

It held a brace of singles that sent the midnight world of the rock club into a boppin' frenzy: 'You Give Love A Bad Name' and 'Livin' On A Prayer'.

They had cowboy-booted feet dancing a frantic two-step and teased hair rockin 'til it dropped.

We loved 'em.

'Social Disease' slithered around on its dirty laugh content, while 'Wanted Dead Or Alive' delivered an unforgettable atmosphere you could cut with a bounty hunter's knife.

It also signalled the beginning of Jon's cowboy fixation (*'I'm a cowboy/On a steel horse I ride/ I'm wanted, dead or alive'*) – maybe the poor guy fell off a rocking horse when he was a little boy?!?

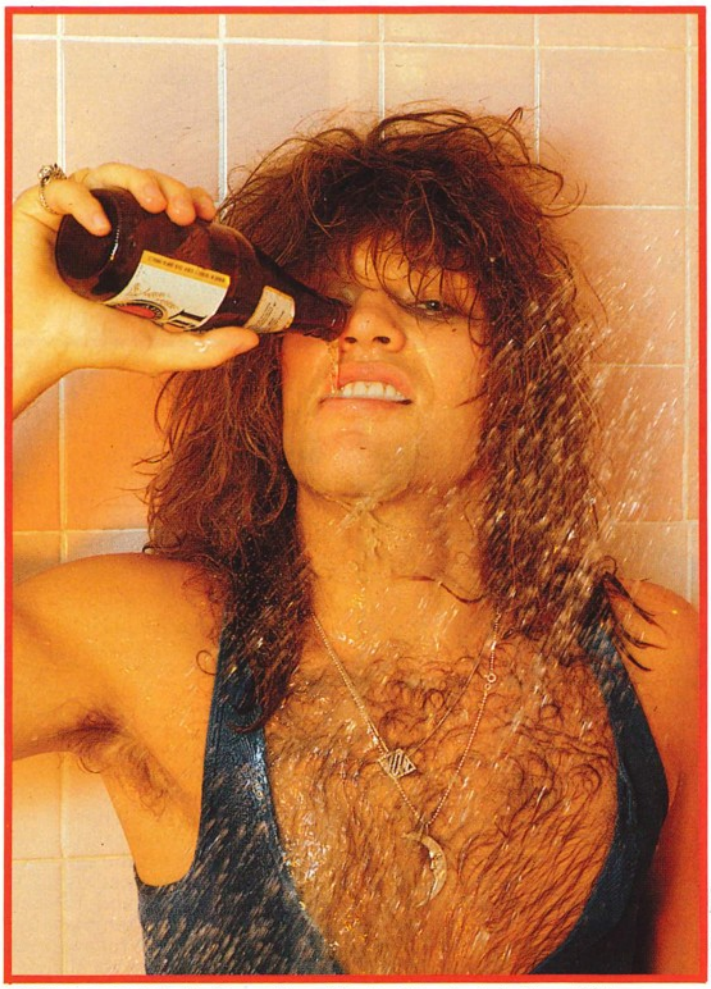
'Raise Your Hands' opened up Side Two *and* the live show (an' what a show!) and was, perhaps, generally overlooked as one of the album's real highlights. It was certainly the one Jon loved, letting him screech out the name of his much-touted home state every night: *'From New York to Chicago, from New Jersey to Tokyo. . .'*.

Er, is that mom's apple pie I can smell?!

This album slipped, dripped and slithered; quipped, quivered and giggled.

I dived in and licked it up.

ALISON JOY



JON BON JOVI displays dismal lack of basic drinking skills

Pic Ray Palmer

RUSH
'Moving Pictures'
(Mercury 6337 160)
Released 1981

Geddy Lee (bass/synths/vocals), Alex Lifeson (guitars), Neil Peart (drums/ percussion)

AFTER AN historical tradition of lengthy 'epics', and the unexpected commercial success of the short and nifty 'The Spirit Of Radio' single from their previous LP, Rush were in many ways caught between a rock and a hard place when they set about making this record.

But on entering Quebec's Le Studio in October 1980, they opted to discipline themselves and record short-format rock numbers. This despite lyricist Peart's ever-broadening literary influences begging even greater scope and freedom. The result: an album of seven songs filled to the very brim with power, inventiveness and sound.

'Moving Pictures' is probably the *busiest* album Rush have ever made, and to this day I can't imagine how the band and producer Terry Brown crammed it all in in just two months recording and mixing time.

Put your headphones on and listen closely to, say, 'The Camera Eye' – inspired by the weighty Jon Dos Passos novel 'Manhattan' – and try to isolate each individual instrument. You'll learn two things: one, each member of the band is playing at the very pinnacle of his ability; and two, all three are tied together in a weave so intricate, so neat, and so damn clever that it's a miracle the band could ever reproduce any of this music live onstage.

But they did, and hence you are already familiar with the other classics contained herein: 'Tom Sawyer', 'Red Barchetta', 'YYZ', 'Limelight', 'Witch Hunt' and 'Vital Signs'.

After the undiluted intensity of this album, the band called another era closed and moved on to simpler, more basic songs. But 'MP' remains: the supreme example of techno-rock. Unsurpassed. . .and unequalled.

NEIL JEFFRIES

METALLICA
'. . . And Justice For All'
(Vertigo 8360602-2)
Released 1988

James Hetfield (vocals/guitar), Kirk Hammett (lead guitar), Jason Newsted (bass), Lars Ulrich (drums)

IF METALLICA are the finest band this decade has given us, then '. . . And Justice For All' is their finest record to date. It's not a perfect album, but it's a perfect collection of songs – marred (to some fans) by a production technique that enhances guitar and vocals and virtually ignores the bass, almost completely negating Jason Newsted's full album debut.

Nevertheless, with this album Metallica single-handedly save the Heavy Metal 'dinosaur' from extinction by rejuvenating the spirit of the NWOBHM. They again offer a refreshing slant on an aged formula and break down the barriers between Metal and neighbouring types of music.

The secret is that they don't throw riffs away. How many times have you loved one riff but hated the record? When Metallica invent a riff they use it, repeat it, twist it and expand it. Having grown up on HM bands themselves, they know exactly what fans want.

Here, the conflicting moods and provoking lyrics of songs such as 'Blackened' and 'One' approach subjects like pollution and war via obscure avenues, touching nerves in the way only great music can.

Each song in turn becomes a favourite, primarily the immediate 'Eye Of The Beholder' while 'The Shortest Straw' and 'The Frayed Ends Of Sanity' creep up on you from behind, just like Metallica promised us when it sounded like they were making up excuses.

Selecting a relatively new album as a peer among all time classics is a risky business, but doing time with this album will justify that choice. AL RHODES

JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE
'Are You Experienced'
(Track 612-001)
Released 1967

Jimi Hendrix (guitar/vocals), Mitch Mitchell (drums), Noel Redding (bass)

JIMI HENDRIX was – and will probably remain, the most innovative and influential rock guitarist the world has ever seen. The number of past and present-day greats who either cite Hendrix as a direct influence or at least attest to his importance in the development of rock guitar playing – out of which grew Heavy Metal – leaves such a claim without doubt.

When Hendrix played guitar, the rule book was shredded and cast to the wind. He opened up new paths and vistas that his contemporaries had never even dreamed of, let alone attempted to explore.

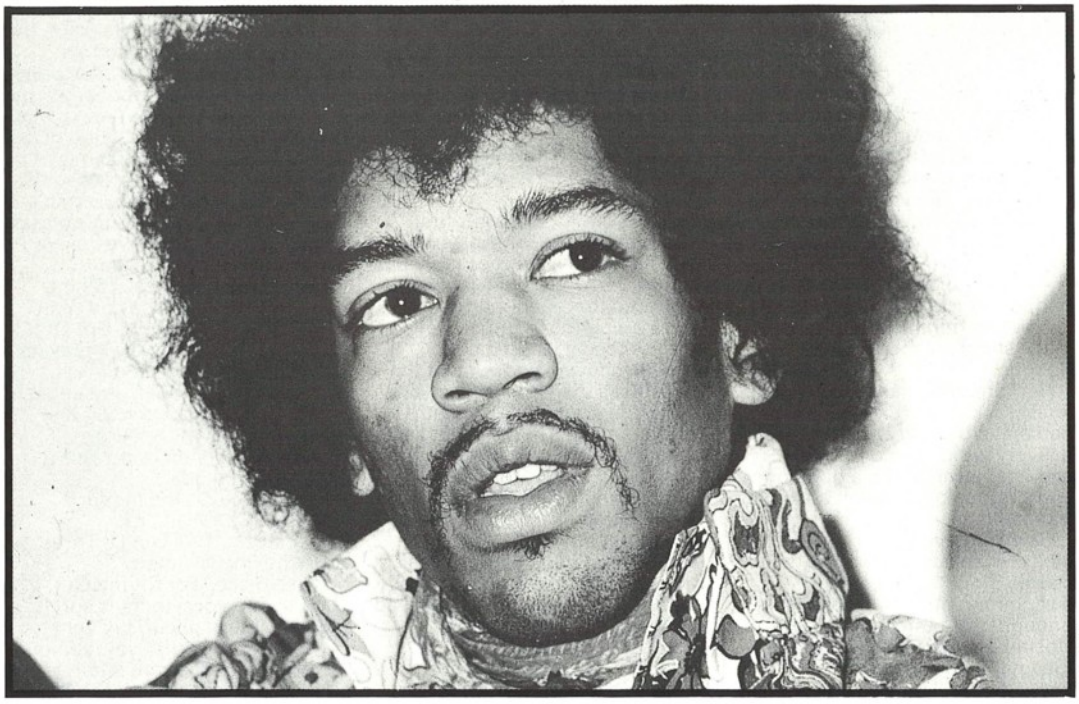
Previously, a handful of guitarists had experimented with the likes of feedback and distortion, though they had mostly failed to grasp a real idea of the potential of such new sounds, and the results had mostly sounded gimmicky, lacking in understanding, and often ridiculous. But when Hendrix came along, he somehow harnessed it all into a controlled, glorious, technicolour perspective via a combination of breathtaking technique and startling vision.

But Hendrix was also a songwriter with tremendous flair, and his first album, 'Are You Experienced' brought together and telescoped his formidable writing talents and unique playing skills into a series of

compact performances bursting with a new kind of energy that, to use the terminology of the day, "blew people's minds".

From the opening trills and feedback that unleash 'Foxy Lady', through the bludgeoning power of 'Fire' and the jagged edges of 'Manic Depression', to the swirling psychedelic imagery bubbling from '3rd Stone From The Sun' and the title-track, the album remains to this day a work of genius. PAUL HENDERSON

JIMI HENDRIX: two decades on and the experience is still timeless



Pic LFI

BAD COMPANY
'Bad Company'
(Island ILPS 9279)
Released 1974

Paul Rodgers (vocals), Mick Ralphs (guitar), Boz Burrell (bass), Simon Kirke (drums)

DO YOU remember the days when what was considered heavy rock really didn't have to be all that heavy?

Yeah? I liked those days, when what really counted was the attitude of the band rather than how many power chords they could pack into three minutes of song. It gave bands room to breathe and really create emotional music. And nobody did it better than Bad Company on their first album.

There was a strong Blues influence in the songs, the way in which they relied on the most simple of rhythms and chord changes and allowed the vocal melody to do the work.

And of course the band had the perfect vehicle with which to follow this minimalist approach in the shape of vocalist Paul Rodgers.

Reckoned by many to be the finest rock singer ever, Rodgers had that slow and easy manner of delivery which could turn an average number into a good one and a good song into an absolute monster.

Each and every song on this album is an acknowledged classic, from the opening swaggering strut of 'Can't Get Enough' right through to the closing acoustic balladry of 'Seagull' and all points in between.

Rodgers handles the vocals with magnificent subtlety and maturity – putting sex into rock 'n' roll without resorting to tight-trousered, cock-thrusting swagger.

And it's to his eternal credit that he can actually make some of the world's most hackneyed lyrics seem meaningful. I mean, titles like 'Rock Steady', 'Ready For Love' and 'Movin' On'!!! If I can forgive them this and *still* hail 'Bad Company' as one of my all-time favourite albums then that must say something, don't you reckon? HOWARD JOHNSON

BLACK SABBATH
'Paranoid'
(Nems NEL6003)
Released 1970

Ozzy Osbourne (vocals), Tony Iommi (guitar), Terry "Geezer" Butler (bass), Bill Ward (drums)

WHILE BLACK Sabbath's first album set a tone for the band with its moody, at times jazzy but always dark music, 'Paranoid' delivered the sledgehammer blow. Being too young to have experienced it when it first arrived, I have no doubt that the magic was there for me just as it was there for instant Sabbath fans the minute they heard the opening, crushing chord of 'War Pigs'.

That, the title-track, 'Iron Man'. . . there's little that can be said about any of those tracks. 'Electric Funeral', 'Fairies Wear Boots' – each one a hit and heavy enough today to go head-to-head with any of the true Metal merchants of the '80s.

There's no question that so much of modern Metal owes an

MEAT LOAF
'Bat Out Of Hell'
(Epic 82419)
Released 1978

Meat Loaf (vocals), Todd Rundgren (guitar), Roy Bittan, Jim Steinman and Roger Powell (keyboards), Kasim Sultan (bass), Max Weinberg and John Wilcox (drums), Rory Dodd and Ellen Foley (backing vocals)

THERE'S A trend these days to snigger at the fading star of fat old Meat Loaf, and at Jim Steinman for his overblown rock operas. Perhaps both have been devalued by time and over-exposed to other artists who couldn't cut this particular brand of fire.

But 1978 was another time, another place. It took six months for 'Bat Out Of Hell' to be accepted. Once it was, it spent the next two years in the US album charts, and considerably longer in the UK equivalent.

For me, its apocalyptic visions, heroic adventures and mighty villainies, its grandiose soundscape and its screaming, screeching power are still unequalled.

It begins with the title-track, the story of a lost boy quitting a rotting city on a motorbike, riding it till every nerve is ripped raw by the open road and he lies, dying under the sun, still thinking of his girl. Meat Loaf's compelling voice, Rundgren's searing 'motorcycle' guitar and Bittan's wry piano take Steinman's classic composition and shove it alive and beating in your face.

From then on it's sex all the way. Sex and beaches on 'You Took The Words Right Out Of My Mouth', sex and football players on 'All Revved Up' and the ultimate teenage sex and angst in cars song on 'Paradise By The Dashboard Light', all are maelstroms of emotion and beautiful melody.

Which leaves the tender 'Heaven Can Wait', the bittersweet 'Two Out Of Three', and the unacclaimed masterpiece, 'For Crying Out Loud'. The vocal there is surely Meat's finest, giving full vent to all the exasperation, joy, sadness and passion of a love affair. Unequalled. JON HOTTEN

MEAT on heat: pic Andre Csillag

amazing debt to Sabbath. The slab-like chords interplaying with speedy bursts of riffing and double-tracked solos while the rhythm section churned and thudded beneath are still the basic tools of pure Metal. Even today's much-celebrated tempo changes are found in Sabbath's music, as the band would switch from a dirge to a shuffle with nary a flicker.

And then there was Ozzy. Wailing and groaning, desperate yet always with the slightest trace of a sarcastic smirk across his lips (or so you imagined), his was the original Heavy Metal voice. Only natural for perhaps the original Heavy Metal band. DON KAYE

AEROSMITH
'Draw The Line'
(CBS 82147)
Released 1977

Steven Tyler (vocals), Joe Perry (guitar), Brad Whitford (guitar), Tom Hamilton (bass), Joey Kramer (drums)

BLISTERS ON yer snakeskin booties guaranteed, pardner! As despite a luxurious and, by all accounts, lengthy production from Jack Douglas – 'Draw The Line' is a stallion of an album, kickin' up a helluva storm out there in the wild. Dirt on the hooves and grit in the grooves.

Never actually touching 'Heavy Metal' yet loaded with enough high (we're talkin' skimmin' the goddamn stratosphere!) energy to keep the needle on overload! But danger is the appeal as this buckin' bronco gives yer unwittin' metabolism no other choice than to rearrange itself to the spine-twistin' acrobatic rhythm.

Unlike most 'Smith product, 'DTL' doesn't 'swagger' – oooooh no, the spurs lacerate the flesh with wounds of a potentially longer lastin' design. From the title-and-openin'-cut (*sic*) with Tyler's now widely adopted rapid-fire yelps and the funkin' sass of 'Sight For Sore Eyes' grindin' so deep it strikes oil every time, to the awesome images conjured up by the truly epic 'Kings And Queens', the whole album has a feel and compellin' continuity that forbids you the sacrilegious game of 'skip-a-track.'

Sleaze was never so classy.

RAY ZELL

KISS
'Destroyer'
(Casablanca CBC 4008)
Released 1976

Paul Stanley (guitar/vocals), Gene Simmons (bass/vocals), Ace Frehley (guitar/vocals), Peter Criss (drums/vocals)

'THE ELDER' notwithstanding, most would proclaim 'Destroyer' to be Kiss' most accomplished slab of in-studio vinyl.

Way back when in the olden, golden days of the band, Messrs Stanley, Simmons, Frehley and Criss always seemed to have something of a brow-knittin' struggle reproducing their live sound in a sterile 'n' sanitised environment.

Away from the bluster and bombast of their onstage performances, and even with some mega-decent material to hand, the results were often pretty damn embarrassing.

Indeed, in the terrifically technical light of today, the band's first three albums ('Kiss', 'Dressed To Kill' and 'Hotter Than Hell') sound barely competent.

But not 'Destroyer', which stands up just fine alongside any multi-million dollar budget late '80s release you'd care to mention. Yep, with 'Bomber' Bob Ezrin at 'D's production helm, Kiss finally came of age in the studio.

You want proof? Then look no further than track one, Side One.

Of course, I'm talking about 'Detroit Rock City', a magnificently, meticulously crafted opus that begins with the sound of a radio dial being twiddled, station to station, and ends with a spectacular head-on collision between car and truck – a monstrous mangling of mutant metal that makes your average M25 pile-up look about as innocuous as a fly splattering on a windscreen.

Sandwiched inbetween 'DRC's audi-FX, you've got one of HM's all-time classic songs (interestingly co-composed by Paul Stanley and Bob Ezrin, with no Gene Simmons input credited at all).

That plodding, deliberate riff is just *so* Ace Frehley, and Stanley's vocal performance is fabulously hyped-up and emotional.

'I feel uptight on a Saturday night!' he screams, and by God you believe him.

'You gotta lose your mind in Detroit Rock City!' he bellows, and you dribble inanely.

'OH MY GOD! No time to turn!' he cries, and you can almost see those headlights blazing directly ahead, dazzling your eyes.

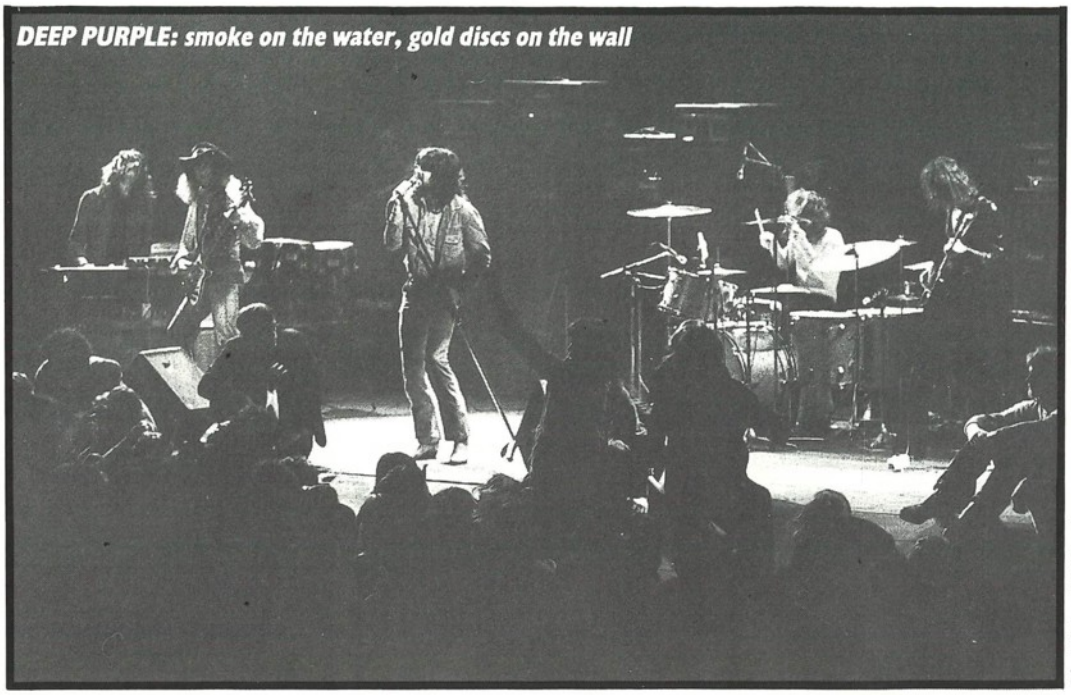
And then there's the chorus: *'Get up! Everybody's gonna move their feet! Get down! Everybody's gonna leave their seat!'* . . . the ultimate in gentle stage-storming persuasion.

Elsewhere, we got such toonz as 'God Of Thunder', 'Flaming Youth', 'Shout It Out Loud' and 'Beth' (classics all; almost too much for humanity to absorb), with only the limp 'Great Expectations' providing a smidgeon of disappointment.

'Destroyer': never was an album so aptly named.

GEOFF BARTON

DEEP PURPLE: smoke on the water, gold discs on the wall



Pic Michael Putland

DEEP PURPLE 'Machine Head' (Purple TPSA 7504) Released 1972

Ritchie Blackmore (guitar), Ian Gillan (vocals), Roger Glover (bass), Jon Lord (keyboards), Ian Paice (drums)

FOR MANY paying punters it will always be Purple's 'In Rock' that sets the heart strings a flutter. For me though I'd have to cite 'Machine Head' as the classic Deep Purple studio album.

In 1971 Deep Purple were beginning to reap the rewards that months of constant world touring had promised. They had just finished their first headlining tour of the USA (abandoned prematurely due to Ian Gillian coming down with Hepatitus) and had re-assembled in a Montreux casino, by Lake Geneva, on December 6 to write and record their follow-up to 'Fireball' using the Rolling Stones' mobile studio.

The same night the band arrived, Frank Zappa And The Mothers Of Invention played a gig and some buffoon with a flare gun fired it at the ceiling and the place burnt down. Luckily an empty hotel nearby was rented and the recording went ahead un-interrupted.

It is now legendary, of course, that 'Smoke On The Water' is a factual description of that incident.

"I wrote the words to it on the back of a paper napkin while I was sitting in my hotel room watching the smoke from the casino float across the water," Gillian said. "Ritchie already had the guitar riff and they just slotted together."

'Machine Head' contains some of Purple's greatest ever moments. A tremendous leap forward from the so-so 'Fireball', several tracks have subsequently attained classic status, particularly 'Smoke . . .', 'Highway Star', 'Space Truckin' ' and 'Lazy' – a romping blues number allowing Blackmore to unleash some of his best ever lead breaks.

Ultimately 'Machine Head' became Deep Purple's best selling album, proof, if proof were needed, that I am not lone in my judgement. DEREK OLIVER

QUEENSRŸCHE 'Operation: Mindcrime' (EMI Manhattan MTL 1023) Released 1988

Geoff Tate (vocals), Chris De Garmo and Michael Wilton (guitars), Eddie Jackson (bass), Scott Rockenfield (drums)

THE CLEVER bastards of rock? That would be all too easy and unthinking, and unthinking is something that Queensrÿche never have been or will be. In 'Mindcrime' they have created the most experimental, accessible piece of genius in the last 10 years. The untouchables. Leaders in a field of one.

It is a tale of corruption, greed and disastrous lust manifest in the heart of society. Hate and man-made evil curled like a cancer, spreading like pollution on a river bed.

And if you don't know the story by now . . . it stars the

revolutionary Dr X, whore turned unlikely nun (Mary), and street kid Nikki caught up in the maelstrom. Nikki is the one with the faith, who believes, the one who pulls the trigger, who draws the blood. Doesn't it all look so unlikely on paper?

But when you listen to the vitriol, the bitterness, it's as if they pulled back the curtain for us all to see deep into the shadows. God knows what's hiding in those corners. It sends shivers throughout my entire body, Tate's hideous rap on 'Spreading The Disease', the ridiculously grandiose, but beautiful 'Suite Sister Mary', the savagery of casual loathing, the taste of insolence, the understanding, the back-stabbing, *'Who do you trust when everyone's a crook?'* Who indeed.

It's sad but compelling, almost likely, but (thankfully) untrue, and in five years time when so many other 'rock legends' have curled up and dried like Autumn leaves, this will be seen as a landmark, a shift in what rock musicians can and should do. PHIL WILDING

LEGS DIAMOND
'Legs Diamond'
(Mercury SRM-1-1136 import)
Released 1977

Rick Sanford (vocals), Mike Prince (keyboards), Roger Romeo (guitar), Michael Diamond (bass), Jeff Poole (drums)

DISCOVERED BY Cliff Burnstein (now co-manager of the likes of Def Leppard and Metallica) and signed to Mercury soon after, Legs Diamond's debut is a glorious slice of Pomp-tinged melodic hard rock from a band often hailed as America's answer to Deep Purple and, more importantly, as 'the best undiscovered rock band in the world'.

'It's Not The Music' opens with subtle drumming from Jeff Poole, exquisite synth work from Michael Prince, and the first major introduction to the passion filled vocals of Rick Sanford. 'Stagefright' builds on the mood, moving things up a gear with some sluggish power chords before 'Satin Peacock' veers the album into the far reaches of the galaxy with tons of energy and some of the sleaziest lyricism of the day. '*You can kiss me but don't mess up my hair*' just has to be one of the most immortal and profound lines ever written.

'Rock 'N' Roll Man' is Sanford's opportunity to haul his legendary flute out of his coat pocket for a few parps to give the track a special feel.

Side Two is, however, where the band strike home the most. Especially on 'Rat Race'; possibly Legs' finest moment which rises slowly to a storming climax. And 'Can't Find Love', a song written along similar epic-like lines, though remaining at a constant down tempo pace throughout. It highlights the Jon Lord-like style of Prince mid-way through and is a fine example of the Legs use of atmospherics and colour.

It's such a pity that Legs Diamond never made it, despite the comeback a couple of years ago. Rumour has it that Rick Sanford intends having another crack as a solo artist. We shall see.

DAVE REYNOLDS

JOURNEY
'Escape'
(CBS 85138)
Released 1982

Steve Perry (vocals), Neal Schon (guitar), Ross Valory (bass), Jonathon Cain (keyboards), Steve Smith (drums)

I'VE LAID memories to rest only to watch 'Escape' draw them up again like fiery ghosts every time the needle glides onto the black vinyl surface. Heartache, achievement and loss fall from this record like pages from an old photo album. It's fair to say that I grew up on this album.

It simply slays me, and I welcome the blade with a knowing grin. From the mesmerising piano intro of 'Don't Stop Believin'', where Schon's guitar sneaks quietly in and then suddenly stands on your face. Perry lamenting, '*It's been a mystery/And still they try to see/ How something good can hurt so bad*', and sounding as though he means it on the majestic 'Who's Crying Now'. The stirring hollow chords of 'Mother Father', the whiplash smile of the title track, the longing of 'Open Arms'. And all topped off by 'Still They Ride', which still has me wondering why I left home and then realising all too clearly.

Classic is a word bandied about all too easily. Some of the most reckless shit in God's own wide world has it land on its face, but if you want to warrant something special, unique, warm to the touch, then it's this.

It rides high in the breeze, spinning higher and forever. I doubt very much if Journey will ever come this or any other way again, but if they tread your path – take it. And if they don't – take this instead. Break free of your preconceptions, escape.

PHIL WILDING

JOURNEY: AOR gods escape into the world of all-time Metal

Pic Chris Walters

BLACK SABBATH
'Black Sabbath'
(NEMS NEL 6002)
Released 1970

Ozzy Osbourne (vocals), Geezer Butler (bass), Tony Iommi (guitar), Bill Ward (drums)

OVER THE course of two days in 1970 in a small recording studio, four likely lads from Birmingham went a long way toward defining the sound and style of Heavy Metal.

'Black Sabbath' is a primal, elemental, brooding record.

It's a nightmare and a warning. Above all, it stands today as it did 19 years ago, as a true masterpiece.

On the cover, a young woman walks alone, through bare trees. In the background a headless statue stands by a pond and an old house. Inside the gatefold sleeve, an anonymous poem tells her story.

And so, in an abstract way, does the music. With one song, 'Black Sabbath', the band define themselves. It begins with the sound of a storm, and then Tony Iommi picks out three dense, slow-moving chords. Ozzy sings, *'What is this, that stands before me'.*

The moment has true menace and real meaning. The song is dark and primitive, and at the end, guitar and bass up tempo without warning into a hooked triplet riff. Unforgettable.

And so is 'N.I.B.' in its wild abandon, 'The Wizard' breezing along, 'Evil Woman' with its macabre atmospherics, 'Sleeping Village' and 'Behind The Wall Of Sleep' with their wicked charm

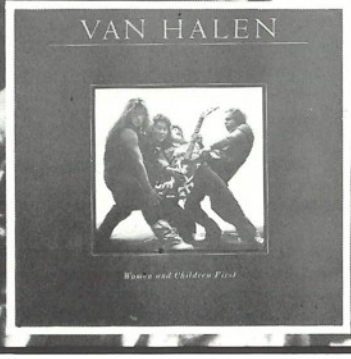
VAN HALEN
'Women And Children First'
(Warner Bros K56793)
Released 1980

Dave Lee Roth (vocals), Eddie Van Halen (guitars), Michael Anthony (bass), Alex Van Halen (drums)

I ONCE loathed this album. I hated it with a vengeance. I rushed home from the record store expecting to hear 'Van Halen III' and got something so different from 'VH' and 'VH2' that I refused to listen to it again for something like four years.

But these days, with the scales cast from mine eyes and the wax purged from me lugs, I rate it as the best rock album ever recorded. Curious, huh?

You see, all I wanted was for Van Halen to continue with the formularised commerciality of the debut and follow-up. I didn't want to hear *this*, whatever it was; and I wasn't t[illegible] on finding out what it was, to be honest. I just knew what it [illegible] 'Women And Children Fi[illegible]



DAVE LEE Roth chooses women for his lifeboat: pic Chris Walter/Photofeaturers

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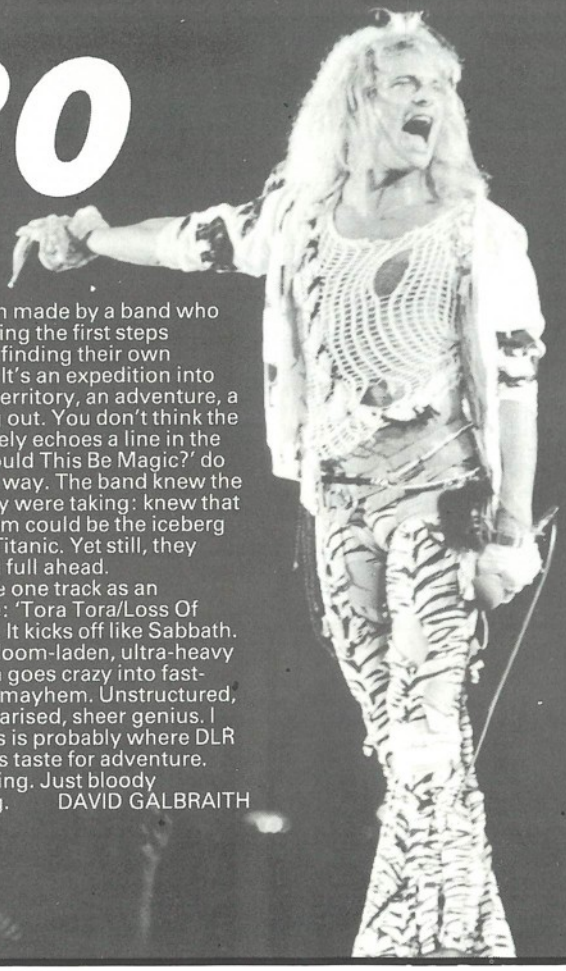


an album made by a band who were taking the first steps towards finding their own identity. It's an expedition into darkest territory, an adventure, a reaching out. You don't think the title merely echoes a line in the song 'Could This Be Magic?' do you? No way. The band knew the risks they were taking: knew that this album could be the iceberg to their Titanic. Yet still, they steamed full ahead.

I'll take one track as an example: 'Tora Tora/Loss Of Control'. It kicks off like Sabbath. Meaty, doom-laden, ultra-heavy and then goes crazy into fast-forward mayhem. Unstructured, de-regularised, sheer genius. I think this is probably where DLR found his taste for adventure.

Stunning. Just bloody stunning. DAVID GALBRAITH

and 'The Warning' in its savage blues.

'Black Sabbath' is as intense, as singular in vision, as captivating, as significant, as mind-blowing as any rock album will ever be. Make sure you own it.

JON HOTTEN

METALLICA
'Kill 'Em All'
(Music For Nations MFN 7)
Released 1983

James Hetfield (geetar/vokals) Kirk Hammett (geetar), Cliff Burton (bass), Lars Ulrich (drums)

HERE IT is folks, the album that started this whole goddamn FRASH movement. . . 'Kill 'Em All'.

It's still my favourite Metallica album, and it sounds as fresh today as when it was first released way back in 1983. Someone said at the time, "Bang that head that doesn't bang" . . . and that pretty much sums up Metallika's musik (if that's the right word).

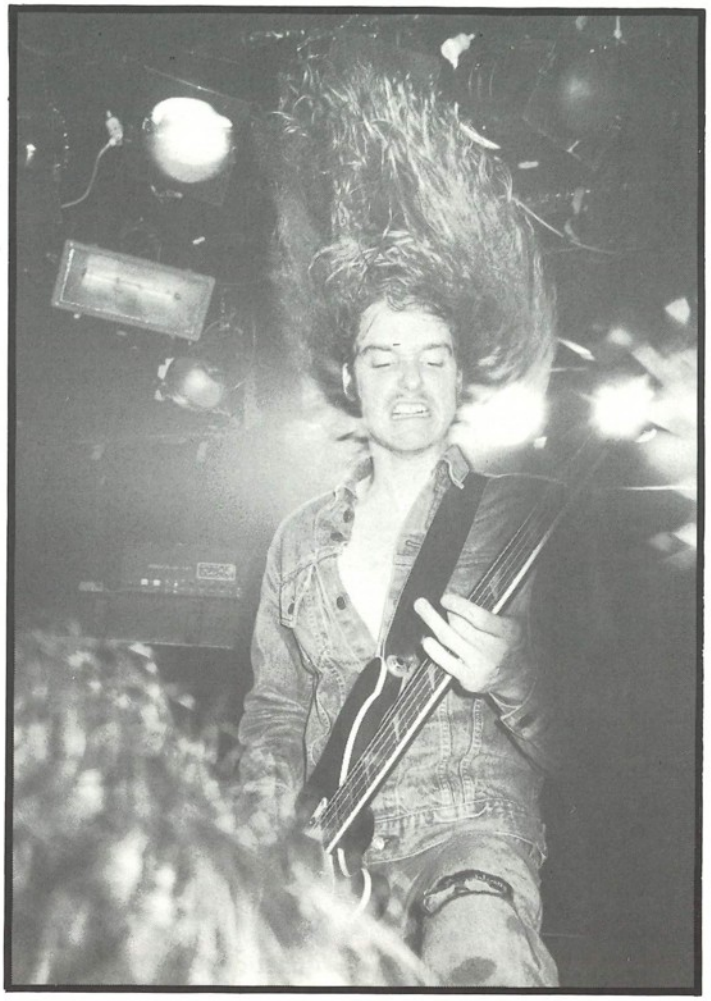
When I first heard 'Kill 'Em All', I totally flipped out. Here was something YOUNG, FAST and ENERGETIK, which akshually sounded NEW and not, dare it say it, KLICHÉD!

'Hit The Lights', for example shows Metallika at their FRASHIEST-straight down the line, no holds barred 'Eavy Metal played at 100mph, but still remaining in tune, which is where a lot of FRASH sadly falls off the rails. Metallika go beyond those boundaries – and beyond the buffers – you've only got to hear the likes of 'The Four Horsemen' (aka the Mekanix) to know what I'm waffling on about, what we have here readers is seven minutes of pure magik-RIFFERAMA to the MAX and more time changes than Network SouthEast!

Elsewhere there's the mid-tempo Ted Nugent influenced 'Jump In The Fire' and if it's real weirdness you krave then lend an ear or three to Kliff Burton's (LIP-lig in peace) '(Anestheia) Pulling Teeth' – the man's wakky bass runs have to be heard to be believed.

'No Remorse' is my all-time Metallika fave, the riffs to this 'un still have me klearing out a bottle of Rebel Yell in one gulp – that's the power of Metallika.

XAVIER RUSSELL



THE LATE Cliff Burton: still kickin' ass on 'Kill 'Em All'

Pic Tony Mottram

UFO
'Lights Out'
(Chrysalis CHR 1127)
Released 1977

Phil Mogg (vocals), Michael Schenker (guitars), Pete Way (bass), Paul Raymond (keyboards/guitar), Andy Parker (drums)

NUMBER TWO in my All-Time Top 20, UFO were my Number One from 1976 until Michael Schenker's ignominious departure around the time of the 'Strangers In The Night' live set. Now, while mad Michael is struggling to remain my favourite guitarist, Phil Mogg seems loathe to let the name UFO sink gracefully to rest. Personally, I reckon 'Lights Out' was recorded by the definitive UFO line-up and, try as hard as he can, Moggy will *never* be able to recreate past glories.

The real glories of this album are to be found in 'Try Me' – a glorious string-driven ballad spiced by Micky's crying solos – the chugalonga title-track with its stream-train riffing, short staccato bursts of guitar melody and heads down 'n' get 'em rhythms and, finally, the epic album-closer 'Love To Love'.

'LTL' is an immense song that builds up to towering proportions on the back of subtle drum patterns and a rock steady bass, climaxing on a suitably high-flying (V), fast-fingered solo courtesy of that crazy German guitar genius (again).

It is interesting to note that the classiest numbers on this platter all involve the Mogg/Schenker writing partnership, Phil seemingly being one of the few people that has managed to extract the best out of the 16-year-old *wunderkind* UFO discovered in 1973.

Alongside UFO's earlier everlasting, ball-breaking classics 'Rock Bottom' and 'Doctor Doctor', 'Lights Out' and 'Love to Love' remain as milestones to the success of a once great British band.

LYN GUY

Pic Alex Solca/Photofeatures Int

SLAYER: mean, moody, dark and . . . mean

SLAYER
'Reign In Blood'
(Deffjam Records GHS 24131)
Released 1986

Tom Araya (vocals/bass), Dave Lombardo (drums), Kerry King (guitar), Jeff Hanneman (guitar)

THE ULTIMATE, in Death Hate Metal. Along with Metallika, the only other FRASH band worth taking seriously.

Up until the release of 'Reign In Blood', I'd always konsidered Slayer to be a bit of a joke having dismissed their first two albums as nothing more than FRASH workouts, but the arrival of producer Rick Rubin, injekted a whole new life into Slayer's musik.

The produktion Rubin achieved on 'Reign In Blood' has yet to be surpassed, and bands like Metallika and Anthrax kan only look on and admire, what Rubin and Slayer have achieved in their short time together. 'Reign In Blood' is still my most played Frash album, and I still don't tire of it. I mean, how kan you go wrong with kuts like 'Angel Of Death'? The riffs are so menacing, my Staffordshire Bull Terrier still runs for kover when he hears 'em.

Of kourse, this is the kut that kaused a lot of politikal stink throughout the Musik Biz, mainly bekause of its anti-Jewish kontent, but if you listen to the lyriks klosely, you'll soon realize that it's not a put down at all, but Slayer's own personal view of the Nazi way of life.

But Slayer's best moment arrives on 'Postmortem', the riff is perhaps the heaviest ever kommited to vinyl.

XAVIER RUSSELL

AC/DC
'Powerage'
(Atlantic K50483)
Released 1978

Bon Scott (vocals), Cliff Williams (bass), Malcolm Young (rhythm guitar), Angus Young (lead guitar), Phil Rudd (drums)

FROM THE sweaty confines of the Marquee to the most enormous of American megadomes, AC/DC have always remained true to their blues-based boogie roots, time and again finding new ways of interpreting an age-old theme with style and humour!

I'm sure everybody has their personal fave piece of Antipodean axemanship, but my vote goes to '78's 'Powerage' as the definitive example of 'DC plugged into the mains. Although Brian Johnson has filled the man's shoes admirably, I have to say that for me, Bon Scott will always have the definitive AC/DC voice. It seemed as if the man put his whole hard drinking, hard loving life into each and every song that he sang.

There was so much character in the performances. And what made AC/DC so special at the time was that in a world where most rock bands had totally lost touch with reality, these Aussies were right down there in the dirt with the rest of us!

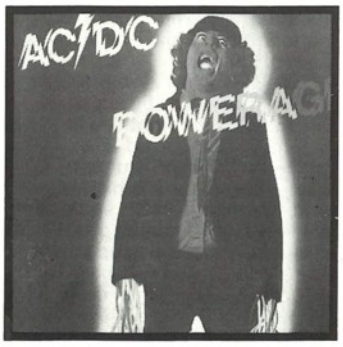
Nothing typifies that spirit bettter than 'Sin City' from this here disc, a hedonistic statement of intent which I guess in some macabre way turned out to be something of an epitaph for poor Bon.

'Powerage' is an album full of the most gritty boogie ever to grace vinyl. AC/DC believed in the music they were making and no f**ker on this earth was going to stop them from playing it.

There is attitude etched in the grooves of 'What's Next To The Moon', 'Up To My Neck In You'. . . probably not the most famous numbers in AC/DC's formidable repertoire, but certainly some of their most compulsive tunes ever.

I always view it as one of the greatest pieces of justice in rock history that, after the release of 'Powerage', AC/DC eventually went on to become the internationally acclaimed act that they now are.

HOWARD JOHNSON



NEW YORK DOLLS
'New York Dolls'
(Mercury 6338 270)
Released 1973

David Johansen (vocals), Johnny Thunders and Sylvain Sylvain (guitars), Arthur Kane (bass), Jerry Nolan (drums)

OH HOW I'd loved to 'ave been a fly on the wall (or even a flea in Thunders' barnet!) when producer Todd Rundgren tried to pilot this baby! Personally I reckon ol' Toddie shoulda just let it career completely outta control and mike-up the casualties.

The legendary New York Dolls were Godzilla in drag, Shirley Temple with a sub-machine gun or any sweet 'n' sour perversion you'd like to point an insatiable tongue at. Much more than legend implies, the Dolls spewed-out some frighteningly good songs; 'Personality Crisis', 'Looking For A Kiss', 'Vietnamese Baby' . . . shit! Ya want me to recite the whole bleedin' track list?!

A street gang with two war-chiefs, the Dolls rumbled with the guttural belch, taunts 'n' sneers of Johansen and the distinctive (!) erratic, sewer stalkin' guitar (?!) of Thunders.

To merely pin a label of 'Trash' on a band as influential and important as the Dolls is insultin'. Here we have a record of unparalleled excellence (yes, I am serious!) in a now well-trodden field of bastardised raunch 'n' roll.

Is it a crime to fall in love with Frankenstein? I truly hope so, I'd hate to think I've been havin' a regular romance all these years . . . !

RAY ZELL

RUSH: weird title and neon pentagram from Virtuosity City

RUSH
'2112'
(Mercury 9100 039)
Released 1976

Geddy Lee (vocals/bass), Alex Lifeson (guitars), Neil Peart (drums/percussion)

AT THE time of '2112's release I was working part-time in the only specialist rock record shop that Liverpool's ever boasted. We were, as I recall, not particularly excited when the first copies of this album with the weird title and the picture of a neon pentagram in a puddle arrived. It was like: "Oh, this is the one from that bunch of Canadians, innit? Shall we whack it on ferra bit?"

We did whack it on and the little bugger *stayed* whacked on for weeks on end.

As Bovis constructed a permanent residence for it on the turntable, we'd all nod like sages and discuss what it was that made the album so appealing.

Sure as Hell wasn't the concept. That was as old hat as the one on Noddy Holder's bonce. It wasn't, in fairness, that the material was *that* hot either, although it did have its moments.

Our conclusion? It was the *performance*. Each and every one of them played a blinder and levered themselves into the hallowed portals that contain Musicians To Be Reckoned With. 'The Temples of Syrinx' were clearly in Virtuosity City. Lifeson, Lee and Peart suddenly became *respected*: '2112' was enough to elevate them to a position of megastardom from which they have but recently slipped.

Rush did, without doubt, cause this album to be made but, irrefutably, there is no doubt this album made Rush.

DAVID GALBRAITH

MOTÖRHEAD
'No Sleep 'Til Hammersmith'
(Bronze BRON 535)
Released 1981

Lemmy (bass/vocals), 'Fast' Eddie Clarke (guitar), 'Philthy Animal' Taylor (drums)

THIS ONE simply gets me foaming, nearly sobbing with uncontrollable happiness. Another life changer, and the album which caused Tony Blackburn to once burble, "And here's quite a noisy little song from, err, Mo-tör . . . head," before playing the single 'Motörhead' live.

I laughed, kicked my legs and stuck a resolute 'V' at the radio, who just couldn't ignore any longer Motörhead's massive popularity. After all, 'No Sleep . . .' debuted at Number One in the UK charts.

It contains some of the hardest, granite-tough good-time hard assed rock 'n' roll ever committed to vinyl. It's right there with 'Live At Leeds' and 'Strangers In The Night', winning my vote over both for its sheer brutality 'No Sleep . . .' is as true a representation of a live band at that time as you will find. If you never saw Motörhead back then, a spin of this loud enough to blow up your neighbours' canary will show you just what it was like.

I distinctly remember blasting this album off my balcony when I lived in Surbiton as a tot on the day of the Royal Wedding in '81. My Dad's stereo always did do this bastard full and unadulterated justice, and it was during 'Bomber' on Side Two that I got one complaint and threat too many. I also got a bloody good telling off, but it was worth it.

Quite apart from being the finest live album of its time and beyond, this also signalled the end of one era and the entrance of a new, exciting one.

Still gotta have 'No Sleep . . .' at least once a week; helps remind me just how many pussies there are out there these days.

STEFFAN CHIRAZI

MOTÖRHEAD: interrupting Royal Wedding festivities

BLUE ÖYSTER CULT
'Secret Treaties'
(Columbia PC32858)
Released 1974

Eric Bloom (lead vocals, stun guitar), Donald 'Buck Dharma' Roeser (lead guitar), Albert Bouchard (drums), Allen Lanier (keyboards, guitar), Joe Bouchard (bass)

HERE IT is: the album that remains, to this day, my favourite hard rock/Heavy Metal album of all time.

I don't know why exactly, but this record is *right* in every way.

Of course, it features the original, classic line-up hitting their stride; Bloom has never sounded more sinister-yet-tacky, while Buck Dharma unleashes some of his most scorching solos, particularly on 'Dominance And Submission' (the all-time killer Cult track) and 'Harvester Of Eyes'.

Every song is a gem: the album kicks off with the creeping 'Career Of Evil' followed by the cryptic, moody 'Subhuman'. 'Dominance. . .' fires up with a controlled fury, the simple yet mesmerising riff building to an epic finish, and 'ME 262' brings it home in a barrage of heavy artillery, warplane guitars divebombing you on all sides.

Flip the record over and you get the blank idiot stare of 'Cagey Cretins', the 'Harvester Of Eyes' giggling hysterically behind more Dharma rumblings, and then there's 'Flaming Telepaths', containing some of Sandy Pearlman's most ominous lyrics. Deceptively gentle verses and a relentless chorus tell a story of experiments and drugs that lead to mutilation and murder, while the haunting last line, *'the joke's on you'*, burns your brain. And last, there's 'Astronomy'; chilling in its cold, lonely beauty, blowing away the 1988 version.

Every song leads neatly to the next and each side builds in drama and complexity to a palpable release, which only the very best of records can deliver. And, my friends, 'Secret Treaties' is among that elite group.

DON KAYE

KISS
'Alive!'
(Casablanca NBLP 7020)
Released 1975

Paul Stanley (guitar/vocals), Gene Simmons (bass/vocals), Ace Frehley (guitar/vocals), Peter Criss (drums/vocals)

I'M SORRY, but I can't take the Kiss of today seriously. Take a cursory glance at the cover to 'Alive!' and you'll begin to see why.

Look: there's Gene Simmons, lean as a steak, thin as a rake, licking his chest hairs, teetering on titanic boots.

There's Ace Frehley, thrusting his rocket-firing guitar from his crotch, dressed to kill like some sonic Cyberman.

There's Paul Stanley, all spandex and feathers, planting one big smacker on the nearest convenient pall of smoke.

And there's Peter Criss at the back there, playing the drums and . . . well, looking pretty much like Peter Criss, ackshully.

'Alive!' is Kiss' finest hour. The moment when everything came together in one mega-collision of LIGHTS, SOUND and ACKSHUN!

Produced an engineered by Eddie Kramer, 'Alive!' is brimful of *attitude*. Kiss blast thru trax like 'Deuce', 'C'mon And Love Me', '100,000 Years' and 'Cold Gin' with the snarling aggression of hungry young lions.

Feel the world shift on its axis as 'Black Diamond' ends, and explosions rupture your speakers. And PAAAARTY as the band exhort y'all to do just that durin' 'Rock And Roll All Nite'.

Experience and believe.

GEOFF BARTON

AEROSMITH
'Live Bootleg'
(CBS 88325)
Released 1978

Steven Tyler (vocals), Joe Perry and Brad Whitford (guitars), Tom Hamilton (bass), Joey Kramer (drums)

THE GREATEST live album ever recorded. There is no claim too big for this one.

Songs stolen, pieces laid into 16 tracks, some caught on a tape recorder in the corner of a small club, offers lifted from radio shows. They even lovingly recreated a coffee cup ring on the cover, authentic bootleg kitsch. Bone-rattling circus headed this way. Live, live, live!

Now, looking back – those rainbow flares, the mic stand swathed in yards of coloured silk, Perry's white flame running on the side of his mass of jet-black hair.

The Toxic Twins falling over themselves for the front rows, while Kramer, Whitford and Hamilton stand it up at the back each and every time it looks as though it might take a tumble.

'Draw The Line' not credited on the sleeve, 'Dream On' cracking a mile wide smile in the sky. 'Walk This Way', given its own special tongue-in-cheek mention in the sleeve notes. I could go on all day and night, mentioning *this*, pointing out *that*, but then I'd only upset myself even more and lift the razor to my wrists if they refuse to come play our side of the pond.

Until they do, I'll saturate myself with this 'Smith, long before they cleaned up their act, before temporary personnel changes, before the others came back for good. Phil, why weren't you out there all those years ago? Regrets, I've had a few.

PHIL WILDING

Pic Chris Walters/LFI

KISS in make-up: brimful of ATTITUDE

DEF LEPPARD
'Pyromania'
(Vertigo VERS 2)
Released 1983

Joe Elliott (vocals), Steve Clarke and Phil Collen (guitars), Rick Savage (bass), Rick Allen (drums)

'PYROMANIA' WAS the album solely responsible for selling me – hook, line and sinker – on my singular addiction: Heavy Metal. It was the first to convince me that an album need not always be three hit singles bridged by 30 minutes of absolute crap but could instead contain 10 glorious stand-out tracks. You'll have no trouble understanding why then it will probably always remain my all time Number One album.

Guitar riffs more effectual than AC/DC at their best, a razor sharp commercial edge and a massive Metal sound all contribute to making 'Pyromania' the most complete and dare I say it, perfect album ever.

It was created at a time when Leppard were suffering a British backlash as scapegoats for the bands who were heading for success in the bright lights of the USA. Was it this tension, new boy Phil Collen, mega-producer Mutt Lange or some unknown element that was accountable for Def Leppard suddenly getting everything spot on?

Pulling out all the stops and utilising every trick in the book earned the band massive success in the States which was (better late than never) finally reflected back home.

'Rock Of Ages' is still an anthem for the masses, 'Photograph' is the song you can't get out of your head, 'Billy's Got A Gun' the epic climax.

'Pyromania' redefined the standards of the whole HM scene in terms of quality and the heights of success that could be reached. A testament to British Heavy Metal at its best.

AL RHODES

JOE ELLIOTT: fiery down under

LED ZEPPELIN
'Led Zeppelin'
(Atlantic ATL 40 031)
Released 1969

Jimmy Page (guitar), Robert Plant (vocals/harmonica), John Paul Jones (bass/organ), John Bonham (drums)

NEARLY 20 years on from the release of this, the eponymous Led Zeppelin debut album, I have to put my hand on my heart and say that it was Zeppelin who pretty much invented the hard rock genre and it is Zeppelin who are still the yardstick by which all other rock bands are judged.

Many have tried to emulate both their sounds and achievements, and some have even come close, but I reckon there's still no one who has bettered what this English four-piece did.

Formed from the ashes of the Yardbirds (and originally called the New Yardbirds), all the qualities of enthusiasm and consummate musicianship are present on this debut album, recorded (according to legend) in a mere 30 hours of studio time!

I find this pretty hard to believe because Page's production is far from slipshod and slapdash, capturing the raw power of Bonzo's drums while never losing sight of the many sophisticated elements of the Zeppelin sound that were so often missed by dozy critics. Take a listen to the breathtakingly beautiful 'Babe I'm Gonna Leave You' for ample evidence that there was a whole lot more to Led Zeppelin than merely four long-haired louts blustering about!

Of course that's not to say that Zep couldn't rock out as hard and heavy as anybody! The fast middle section of 'Dazed And Confused' is awesomely tough and 'Communication Breakdown' can hold its head high with any heavy song you may care to mention.

I don't think there has ever been a band before or since that had such a massive impact on the rock field and 'Led Zeppelin' is probably the finest aural means of demonstrating that fact!

HOWARD JOHNSON

JUDAS PRIEST
'Sad Wings Of Destiny'
(Gull GULP 1015)
Released 1976

Rob Halford (vocals), Glenn Tipton (guitars/piano), KK Downing (guitars), Ian Hill (bass), Alan Moore (drums)

'SAD WINGS. . .' wasn't the first Judas Priest album I ever bought; but because it was deleted and very difficult to find in the States while I was growing up, my friends and I regarded it with almost mythical awe.

When I finally stumbled upon it – in 1979 – it certainly lived up to my expectations and I was head over heels in love with studio versions of songs I had only previous heard live, *viz* 'Victim Of Changes', 'Tyrant', 'Ripper' and 'Genocide'. And the tracks I was hearing for the first time captivated me as well. Listening to the record nowadays, however, brings it into an interesting light.

To begin with, it's without doubt the oddest Judas Priest album ever recorded, with the exception of 'Rocka Rolla'. But while the latter is strange because it sounds almost nothing like the band we know and love today, 'Sad Wings. . .' (although recognisably Priest) contains idiosyncracies that the band never explored fully. Weird vocal harmonies surface on 'Tyrant' and 'The Ripper', while 'Dreamer Deceiver' features some of Halford's most operatic work and is actually part of a little concept piece, along with 'Deceiver'.

Then there is 'Epitaph', a truly bizarre gem that show cases Glenn on piano for the first and only time in the band's career. This, in turn, is followed by 'Island Of Domination', a forgotten track that remains one of Priest's heaviest and most precisely punchy.

It's all brought to you through a budget production job that, for its limitations, still captures the raw energy of the band who would soon flower into one of Metal's true giants. DON KAYE

IS IT a bird? Is it a plane? Is it the Tremeloes. . . No, it's Judas Priest before they discovered leather

METALLICA
'Ride The Lightning'
(Music For Nations MFN 27)
Released 1984

James Hetfield (vocals/rhythm guitar), Kirk Hammett (lead guitar), Cliff Burton (bass), Lars Ulrich (drums)

WHAAAAT?! THE Baroness Of Bonk taintin' her perfectly varnished nails on . . . Metallica?! Indeed so, cos in the Metalliboyz we have a truly remarkable band, and 'Ride The Lightning' was the first LP to seriously suggest that they were Going Places.

The power, the humour, the sheer force of a musical genre that could no longer be ignored brought us 'Creeping Death', my fave Metallitrack to date. Explosive and predatory, it is the regular daily wake-up call on the Kolossal *K!* Kompakt Disk Destruktor: auto repeat track seven, volume set to stun, please Skarlet!

Okay, classic number one dealt with.

'For Whom The Bell Tolls' stalks in in second position, proving James Hetfield to be a distinctive and capable vocalist (not a screamer) – indeed the song is almost a showcase for his versatility. (I'm trying not to mention his legs too, but I don't know if I can hold out much longer!)

Third joint winner must, of course, be 'Fade To Black', showing all lesser mortals that there *can* be pylons of power in a slow song, provided it's properly thought out. No problems for our boys here.

Those three are just the untouchables; check out the title track and instrumental 'The Call Of Ktulu' for your regular fix of MetalliMegaMetal.

Stylin'!

Oh, an' when you've got a moment to spare, cop the pic of Lars on the back of the sleeve – complete with dead caterpillar-style moustache! Snigger. Sadly, no pix of James' legs in evidence . . . ALISON JOY

DEEP PURPLE 'In Rock' (Harvest SHVL 777) Released 1970

Ritchie Blackmore (guitar), Ian Gillan (vocals), Roger Glover (bass), Jon Lord (keyboards), Ian Paice (drums)

'IN ROCK' was actually Purple's fifth album, but really it was the beginning. Three with singer Rod Evans pale as false-starts beside it, and the immediate predecessor 'Concerto For Group And Orchestra' is best seen as a one-off experiment.

'In Rock' then was where the classic Mark II legend was born. New recruits Gillan and Glover strolled in, exchanged words and glances with the three founder members, and something just *clicked*. "Chemistry" is an over-used cliché these days that originates from the kind of thing happening on this record.

Even though the – by today's standards – leaden production (no that's not fluff on the needle, 'Into The Fire' is *supposed* to sound like an old King Crimson number), the power of the LP still blasts through. Check out the mindless but devastating riff on 'Flight Of The Rat', the staccato strut of 'Living Wreck', or Blackmore's gonzoid guitarwork in the all-guns-blazing gallop of 'Hard Lovin' Man'.

But 'In Rock' is also an uncanny mixture of light and shade, as its two best known cuts show. 'Speed King' opens with a thunderous crash which dissolves into gentle organ tones, before picking up again as a furious romp around snatches of old rock 'n' roll lyrics. 'Child In Time' too, switches pace from Lordy's sweet and simple keyboard intro to the whole band's furious and frantic forays beneath Gillan's famed sung/screamed vocals.

Truly classic stuff – among Purple's own back catalogue and the whole range of its contemporaries. The edge this album had in 1970 remains undulled by time. NEIL JEFFRIES

BLACKMORE'S RAINBOW 'Rainbow Rising' (Polydor/Oyster 2490-137) Released 1976

Ritchie Blackmore (guitar), Ronnie James Dio (vocals), Jimmy Bain (bass), Tony Carey (keyboards), Cozy Powell (drums)

'THERE'S NO sun in the shadow of the wizard,
See how he glides, why he's lighter than air!'

Strange, innit? As mainman with Dio, these days it's practically impossible to listen to Ronnie James' dated and overblown lyrics, let alone take 'em at all seriously.

But, with Rainbow, somehow the magic still lingers . . .

'Rising' can really be regarded as Rainbow's first official big league album.

Its predecessor, 'Ritchie Blackmore's Rainbow', featured the Man In The Black and Electric Elf together with a bunch of hired hands and was basically a light-hearted, rock' 'n' rollin' romp.

But, with 'Rising', it was obvious Blackmore, Dio and their new, heavy duty recruits meant business.

The cover tells it all: a giant fist thrusting out from an angry sea, trailing seaweed and clenching a precious, wondrously vibrant rainbow.

Produced by Martin Birch, 'Rising' has a mist-shrouded, impenetrable vibe. The album rumbles out of the speakers, opens its black cloaked arms wide . . . and envelopes you in soaring, sweeping Sensurround.

Ritchie's guitar darts and weaves like a warlock casting secret spells. Cozy's drums thunder like H-bombs detonating on a distant horizon. And Dio delivers probably his finest-ever vinyl vocal performance, his voice giant and commanding, his words magical, fantastical . . . but, most of all, *believable*. No Denzil The Dragon-style dreck

Pic Paul Canty/LFI

RITCHIE BLACKMORE: thermo nuclear rock 'n' roll a-risin'

here, friends, just a booming, authoritative voice singing songs with great titles like 'Tarot Woman', 'Run With The Wolf' and 'A Light In The Black'.

And then there's 'Stargazer', one of only a pair of trax on Side Two, and the number from which that opening quote is taken.

This is Rainbow at their most solemn and sensational: the song is long (but not overlong) and painstakingly, intricately constructed.

Its mood is so massively foreboding that, by the end, the listener is left battered and drained by its sheer, sullen intensity.

Magnificent. GEOFF BARTON

SEX PISTOLS
'Never Mind The Bollocks Here's The Sex Pistols'
(Virgin V2086)
Released 1977

Johnny Rotten (vocals), Steve Jones (guitars), Paul Cook (drums), Sid Vicious (bass) – as per sleeve credits, though many insist it was the band's original bass player, Glenn Matlock, playing on the album

THEY HAD a crazy year, the Sex Pistols . . . 12 months that transformed them from King's Road layabouts into King Hell legends, a state-of-grace they still enjoy 11 years later. And rightly so: from the moment they released their first awesome single, 'Anarchy In The UK', in November 1976 (banned by the BBC soon after), until the release of this, their first and only real album, almost exactly a year later, the Sex Pistols were the most infamous rock 'n' roll group on the planet.

Their follow-up single, 'God Save The Queen', emerged five months later.

It made Number One the very same week the Queen was celebrating her Silver Jubilee. The BBC, who again had banned the record, showed it at Number Two for the duration.

It was history in the making, kiddos. Rock music used as so many groups have said they're gonna use it but never really do – as an ice-cold shaft of fear that gnawed like a rat at the heart of the establishment, causing them to tremble at the very mention of the name S*x P*st*ls.

They were a phenomenon. And in recognition the media even christened their music with a new name: punk rock. By the time 'Never Mind The Bollocks . . .' was released, every town and city in Britain had at least one 'punk rock' band of their own . . . New Wave.

It was the attitude that really counted. The music came second.

All the singles – including 'Pretty Vacant' and 'Holidays In The Sun' – are included here, as are other such pearly swine as 'Submission' and 'Problems'.

The greatest punk rock album ever made. And that's only half the story . . . MICK WALL

LED ZEPPELIN
'Led Zeppelin II'
(Atlantic Records 588 198)
Released 1969

Jimmy Page (guitars), Robert Plant (vocals), John Paul Jones (bass), John Bonham (drums)

WHEREAS LED Zeppelin's eponymous debut had been a statement of intent, transfixing the listener in search of the ultimate blues-based rock with a thunderous, sledgehammer beat and edge-of-mayhem arrangements, (many of them blues 'classics') 'Led Zeppelin II' (released the same year) consolidated and exceeded the first album's success with a collection of their own material that was equal to such 'classics'.

And whereas 'Led Zeppelin' had contained perhaps one really masterful moment in the simple but nevertheless monster riff of 'Communication Breakdown', 'II' saw, for one thing, the emergence of Jimmy Page as perhaps the ultimate riff King, demonstrating – with such as 'Whole Lotta Love', 'Heartbreaker' and 'Living Loving Maid' – an apparent ability to conjure those almost ludicrously simple but superb riffs from a bottomless magician's hat.

With those and others, like the softer 'Ramble On' and 'Bring It On Home', and Bonham's outing on the blitzkrieg *tour de force* of 'Moby Dick', 'II' also set standards: instrumental virtuosity, heavyweight production (another string to Page's bow), the perfect balancing of hammer-and-anvil pounding with more delicate folk/blues material, and combined writing skills that produced – even so early on – some of heavy rock's finest and most enduring moments.

Rather than being merely another brick in the wall of heavy rock that has constantly been built higher and wider, 'Led Zeppelin II' is more an essential stud in the leather trousers of life.

PAUL HENDERSON

AEROSMITH
'Permanent Vacation'
(Geffen WX 126)
Released 1987

Steve Tyler (vocals/piano/harmonica), Joe Perry (guitars), Brad Whitford (guitars), Tom Hamilton (bass), Joey Kramer (drums)

AMAZING WHAT a little bit of pressure can do ain't it? After all the excitement of the original Aerosmith line-up getting back together again in '84, the first piece of vinyl that the band produced (1985's 'Done With Mirrors') pretty much sank without a trace. Hardly the most auspicious of returns for such a band.

So with asses firmly squelched up against the wall, the original 'Smiths knuckled down to some serious graft, pulled in the outside writers Desmond Child, Jim Vallance and Holly Knight – and came up with this hot little hootnannie!

'Permanent Vacation' has been widely acclaimed as the finest album Aerosmith have ever put together – and believe you me they've done some pretty hot stuff in the past. Check out the other pages here for proof!

I'd say that the most surprising thing about 'PV' is that the band have managed to somehow make a more commercial album that didn't in any way reek of a sell-out.

Maybe it's down to something as simple as good old-fashioned songwriting.

The tunes are quite simply magnificent, crossing a broad spectrum of styles yet all held together by Tyler's best vocals ever, to always retain that distinctive 'Smith feel!

'Permanent Vacation' is a little bit like a box of Quality Street. Everybody's got their favourite. Whether it's the funky sass of 'Dude (Looks Like A Lady)', the hard rock energy of 'Heart's Done Time' or the puffy balladeering of'Angel' – there's always something to keep your interest up! HOWARD JOHNSON

10

AC/DC
'Back In Black'
(Atlantic K50735)
Released 1980

Brian Johnson (vocals), Angus Young and Malcolm Young (guitars), Cliff Williams (bass), Phil Rudd (drums)

WITH 1979's 'Highway To Hell' LP it looked as though AC/DC were finally on their way to collecting the big pot of gold at the end of their rainbow. The mood looked good but disaster struck on Thursday February 21 1980 when, at the age of 33, Bon Scott was found dead in a car. He had choked to death on his own vomit just as Jimi Hendrix had done 10 years previously.

At first, things were uncertain concerning AC/DC's future but soon enough the all clear was given and in April 1980 Brian Johnson, a Newcastle-born ex-roofer and singer with Geordie, was announced as Scott's replacement.

With the riffs already written the band immediately flew to Compass Point Studios in the Bahamas and laid down the basic tracks, with Johnson penning the lyrics as they progressed. The resultant record, named as a tribute to Bon, was a mighty effort, slaying all previous AC/DC releases and setting itself proud as a peacock right up with the greatest rock albums of all time.

A Top 10 blockbuster in the UK, it faired even better in the States where it reached Number Four!

Frankly there isn't a duff track on this record for simply every song is fitted with a big boogie beat and more guitar overdubs that you or I could reasonably handle. 'Hells Bells', perhaps my all time favourite AC/DC track, commences proceedings with the weird sound of a chiming bell before causing utter pandemonium when the main riff crashes in. From then on it's a vicious rollercoaster of slashing riffs and toe-tappin' boogie.

AC/DC have recorded many albums since 'Back In Black', yet it's fair to say that none have approached the quality or sheer throttle achieved here.

DEREK OLIVER

AEROSMITH
'Rocks'
(CBS 81379)
Realeased 1976

Tom Hamilton (bass), Joey Kramer (drums), Joe Perry (guitar), Steve Tyler (vocals/keyboards), Brad Whitford (guitar)

OKAY, OKAY. So its predecessor 'Toys In The Attic' has shifted more units, but we all know that 'Rocks' is the *one*, right? The ace card. The killer-diller.

I'm sure the band rebelled against the AM airwaves success of 'Toys. . .' and lifted an arrogant finger to all in softly-softy radio-land by producing a follow-up that was filthy and nasty, loud and lusty, shit-hot and steaming. Yeah!

Me and this album have a serious thing going – I even love the smell of the sleeve.

This is the record that brought us 'Back In The Saddle', with more cowboy swagger than John Wayne with one boot off; 'Last Child' and – cue sirens, cue drum roll, cue trashcan riff – 'Rats In The Cellar'.

But that's only the half of it. You want more? Well, stop drooling and turn the sucker over.

Get 'Sick As A Dog' with Tyler, squinting hard, fist clenched against his temple *begging* for release from some disgusting over-indulgence; 'Nobody's Fault', with Kramer's demon double-shuffle on the hi-hat; 'Get The Lead Out' as Perry's T Rex-like riff does just that; all of these leading to the sex party sleaze of 'Lick And A Promise', a manic anthem that slices you in two like a head-first ride down a rusty razor-blade.

Look, if 'Rocks' was a burger, it'd be a 100 per cent pure beef flame-grilled, cheese-drippin' triple-decker. Fresh bun, crisp

salad. . . and no fuggin' dill pickles! Buy or die of rock starvation.

NEIL JEFFRIES

JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE
'Electric Ladyland'
(Track/Polydor 823 359-2)
Released 1968

Jimi Hendrix (guitar/vocals) Noel Redding (bass), Mitch Mitchell (drums)

THEY SAY the night this album was released the moon turned a fire red. . . And why not? The world's greatest ever rock guitarist had just released his greatest ever album, and suddenly the world was a wild and raw place to be; no earth; no gravity; the night a mere cloak to be discarded; the horizon an inferno.

Awright. . . Most of you will know this album only too well already.

But for the one or two of you who *still* don't know. . .

James Marshall Hendrix was, quite simply, the man: a master guitarist who taught the electric guitar to speak in tongues.

All these years after his death at 29 from drugs and alcohol abuse, and *still* no one has come along who can even walk in his shadow. The word 'genius' has been flogged to the point of death in these pages, but that's what Hendrix was. And this album is the final proof.

A double collection, 'Electric Ladyland' boasts such never-to-be-surpassed moments as 'Cross Town Traffic', 'House Burning Down', 'The Burning Of The Midnight Lamp' and, of course, the psychedelically frayed Number One hit from the album, 'Voodoo Chile (Slight Return)' – along with a groin-tingling version of Earl King's rhythm an' blues classic, 'Come On (Part One)', and Bob Dylan's apocalyptic 'All Along The Watchtower' – a version so wild and bloodshot even Bobby D admitted it blew his own rheumy-eyed version to hell.

Every rock fan in the world knows the name Jimi Hendrix. This album is one of the big reasons why. A true classic.

MICK WALL

METALLICA
'Master Of Puppets'
(Music For Nations MFN60)
Released 1986

James Hetfield (vocals/guitar), Kirk Hammett (lead guitar), Cliff Burton (bass), Lars Ulrich (drums)

WHILST Metallica's latest album, '. . . And Justice For All' is the great album that has confirmed the band's arena status, 'Master Of Puppets' was the one that warned it was gonna happen – big time.

The chunks were enormous, thick, full, aggressive and glorious in their consistency, sending my head into small fits and leaving my senses reeling.

Opener 'Battery', riffs more dangerous than an army of serial killers on the loose; 'Master Of Puppets' itself, threads stitched resolutely together to form a coat of armour.

First track, Side Two, 'Disposable Heroes', a mindf**k; 'Orion', a tribute to the depth, versatility and strengths of 'Talli-music; and 'Damage Inc', as brutal and damning a concluding track as any fan could deal with.

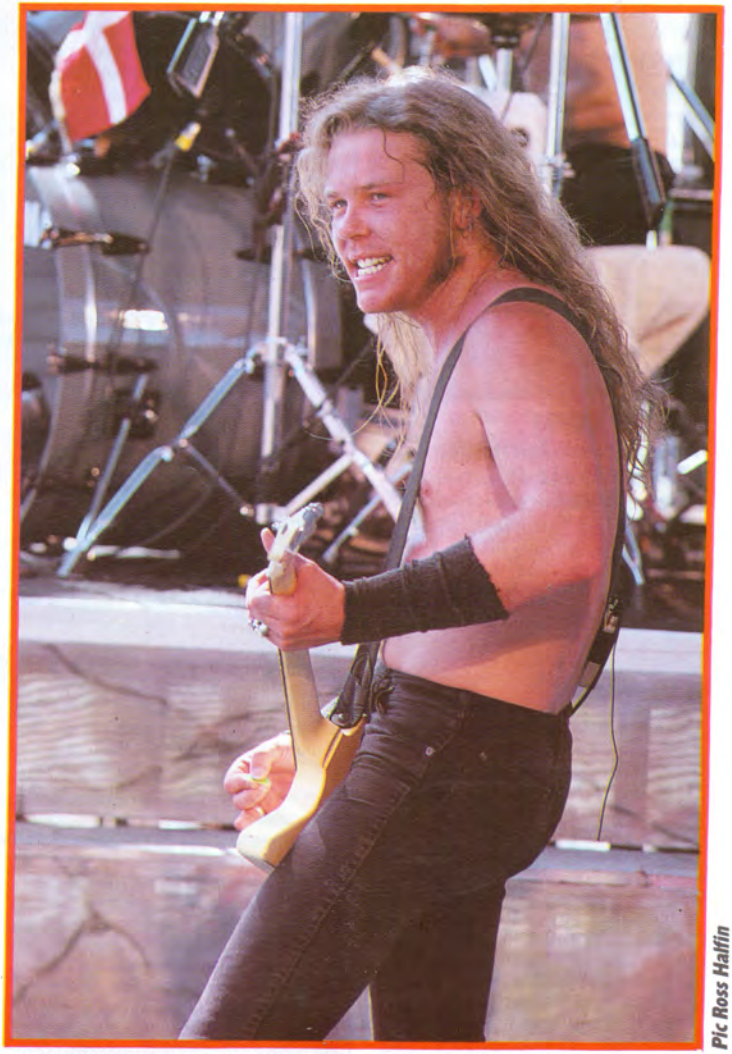
This album signalled new territories for Metallica, showing the style of old as a firm root yet expanding and widening along newer, more inventive and revolutionary paths.

'MOP' was the album too that signalled Metallica's historical tour of North America supporting Ozzy, and it is also a classic representation of the Hetfield/Ulrich/Burton/Hammett line-up.

When this was released, I was working on a rival publication where Metal was less respected and my misguided editor ignored my pleas to put the band on the cover . . . as an up-front exclusive.

I just hate to say I told you so, but hey, shit happens, and Metallica with – 'MOP's classic platinum help – have gone on to become the most happening shit of the late '80s.

STEFFAN CHIRAZI



JAMES HETFIELD of METALLICA: look, no strings

Pic Ross Halfin

DEF LEPPARD
'Hysteria'
(Bludgeon Riffola/Phonogram HYSLP I)
Released 1987

Joe Elliott (vocals), Steve Clark and Phil Collen (guitars), Rick Savage (bass), Rick Allen (drums)

'TOTALLY HYSTERICAL' screeched the headline to my original five-K review of the mighty 'Hysteria' back in the Summer of '87. And I was!

But only now, some 15 months after its release, can all of 'Hysteria's complexities, twists and bywaters be fully grasped. Only after multiple plays can its sheer magnificence be fully comprehended.

Take for instance 'Gods Of War', a track I couldn't quite get to grips with in the coupla days I had to review first time around. YOWZA! Pure excellence, a song beyond the average three minutes of shake-it-all-about riffola. It brought a new maturity to light. A Goddamn knee-shaker.

'Animal' never tires; 'Armageddon It' (*'Ooooh, are yooo geddin' it?!'*) never fails to amuse; 'Pour Some Sugar On Me' does just that. And the title track, in the words of the airhead on the Holsten Pils TV ad; "Turns my spine to custard and I get goose-pimply all over!". Quite.

And it sold. Crashed into the UK LP charts at Number One, and now – over a year after its release – it still hovers around the top of the US chart, even though the American tour has finished! That it ever appeared at all was a miracle; the months and months at Wisseloord Studios were plagued by disaster, and many (who now know better) claimed they'd never be able to top 'Pyromania'. 'Hysteria' is a triumph on musical, technical and personal terms, a peak few would dare dream about, let alone attain.

It's no secret that this band can do no wrong in my eyes, but 'Hysteria' is a Truly Classic Album that can sit alongside the rest in this Top 100 without batting an eye. Make sure you're geddin' it! ALISON JOY

GUNS N' ROSES
'Appetite For Destruction'
(Geffen 924 148-1)
Released 1987

W Axl Rose (vocals/synth/percussion), Slash and Izzy Stradlin (guitars), Duff 'Rose' McKagan (bass), Steven Adler (drums)

SPEWED UP from the gutters of the Los Angeles sleaze scene and straight into the harsh glare of the public eye, it seemed as if Guns N' Roses simply erupted from out of nowhere and in the twinkling of an eye became the biggest, baddest, sleaziest rock 'n' roll band in aeons!

Could they believe it? Could we, for that matter? Well actually, yes I *could*, because no doubt about it, 'Appetite . . .' has to be the most authentic, exciting rock 'n' roll album in years. The two main plus-points that make this such a special album can be summed up in a mere two words: 'attitude' and 'songs'.

Without giving a flying f**k for such bogus conceptions as 'acceptability' and 'radio

MONTROSE
'Montrose'
(Warner Bros K46276)
Released 1973

Sammy Hagar (vocals), Ronnie Montrose (guitar), Bill Church (bass), Denny Carmassi (drums)

PISSED OFF with playing second fiddle to soft rock bums like Van Morrison and Edgar Winter, guitarist Ronnie Montrose, a native of San Francisco, formed the definitive Metal quintet in the Spring of 1973. By the late Summer they had written, recorded and released what is arguably the greatest debut HM LP of all time. I bought it when it first came out and blow my whistle if it ain't one of the classiest slices of Metal and melody still available (but not on CD!).

Let's put this into some sort of perspective. It's 1974, you're groovin' to the likes of the Sabs, Quo, Purple and Heep and, natch all things British are the very best. The Americans have kept a low profile in the Metal front up to now, handing out Grand Funk Railroad and losers like Bloodrock and Black Pearl. Then like a lightning bolt, Montrose arrive from nowhere, blowing the grungy British plodders into oblivion. This then, was the

MONTROSE: blew grungy British plodders into oblivion

sound of the '80s. Sharp production (by Ted Templeman), lethal riffs, awesome vocals and cataclysmic songs. How could they fail?

But, of course, they did. The world it seems was never truly ready for the titanic bluster of Montrose. They tried double hard, played a myriad of gigs both here and in the Americas and struck all the right moves. Alas, the band hit hard times, Sam Hagar and Ronnie eventually came to blows and pow! In the blink of an eye, it was over. Shame!

'Montrose' is not for the faint of heart. It hits hard and loud. Riffs stab the brain like a white hot poker and Sam's vocals are as raw as exposed nerves. 'Space Station No 5' and 'Rock Candy' ought to carry a National Health warning.

I saw Montrose live twice. They slayed. What more do you need to know? DEREK OLIVER

Pic Robert Ellis

friendliness', Guns N' Roses made an album that was rock 'n' roll. No more, no less. With songs that made you wanna jump outta your seat and a sound that successfully captured a band kicking out for all they were worth.

A credible hard rock record because it eschews all the Spandexed bullshit and got back to the essence of what made rock exciting in the first place.

Who could argue with those songs? 'It's So Easy', 'Nightrain', 'Sweet Child O' Mine'; songs which ran the gamut of hard rock styles and never *once* fell flat on their arses!

It's always a worry when compiling a list of all-time classics that you're gonna go for albums that are fresh in the memory, but with 'Appetite For Destruction' I ain't got no such worries. HOWARD JOHNSON

LED ZEPPELIN
'Led Zeppelin IV'
(Atlantic Records 50008)
Released 1971

Jimmy Page (guitar), Robert Plant (vocals), John Paul Jones (bass), John Bonham (drums)

AN ALBUM that should need no introduction to anybody who reads *Kerrang!* and professes a taste for 'Heavy Metal music'. 17 years after its release, this remains one of the finest, certainly one of the most enduring exponents of the genre ever recorded.

Indeed, three of its tracks – 'Black Dog', 'Rock And Roll', and 'Stairway To Heaven' – are amongst the Top 10 most famous rock songs ever written; the latter possibly the most famous of all.

The other five tracks are equally compelling, however.

Zeppelin had finally hit on the perfect balance between the whimsical acoustic posturing of much of their previous album, and the knife-edge stomp of 'Led Zeppelin II'.

In 'Black Dog', 'Rock And Roll', 'Misty Mountain Hop' or 'When The Levee Breaks', between Jimmy Page's bedevilled guitars and John Bonham's hypnotic and bestial percussion, Zeppelin hit a groove as cruel and murderous, as sensual and ambient, as a snake working its way slowly around your throat . . .

While on tracks like the breathtaking 'The Battle Of Evermore', or the sunny and lilting 'Going To California', they were able to indulge Page's penchant for the occasional Joni Mitchell-flavoured acoustic ramble and still get away with sounding weighty.

And of course, the two styles were never more memorably merged than on the album's quintessential moment: 'Stairway To Heaven'.

The greatest singer, the greatest guitarist, the greatest drummer and certainly the weirdest bass player, Led Zeppelin were undoubtedly the greatest, most charismatic Heavy Metal stars the world has ever seen. MICK WALL

VAN HALEN
'Van Halen'
(Warner Bros K56470)
Released 1978

Dave Lee Roth (vocals), Eddie Van Halen (guitar), Michael Anthony (bass), Alex Van Halen (drums)

IT WAS Barton who nurtured my appreciation of Van Halen. In a cursory half page review in *Sounds* he simply wrote that 'Van Halen' was, "conceivably, the most significant Metal album since 'Montrose'."

Believing his insight to be quasi-perfect I purchased an import copy, (a rare commodity in those days) played the record just once, lifted my jaw from the ground and decided that yes, this indeed was the second coming. Firm and fancy, Van Halen dragged Metal through a time-wrap. By jolly, we had reached the '80s even though the year was still 1978!

Whatever it was, 'Van Halen' had it all. Songs; the monster anthem 'Running With The Devil', the spitfire rapid riffing 'Ain't Talkin' 'Bout Love' and the grandiose arena rock of 'Little Dreamer'.

Guitar: Eddie Van Halen piled on the pressure blowing gaskets in every bar. In 'Eruption', a 102 second solo guitar extravaganza, he redefined and subsequently revolutionised the HM axe style.

Production: Ted Templeman (the in-house WB knob twiddler who five years earlier had ironically master minded the debut 'Montrose' album), simply recorded and mixed this LP to a standard light years in advance of any similar item.

Finally it had Dave Lee Roth; performer and vocalist extraordinaire, the man with the biggest mouth in rock.

Within days of the album's release, Van Halen suddenly took the world by storm. A few local low key LA gigs turned into riot torn events, the band made their triumphant UK debut the same year supporting Black Sabbath (they received two encores at the Hammersmith Odeon) and the album eventually peaked at Number 19 on the American charts.

I played the album this morning (admittedly on CD) and it stood the test of time. Fresh and electric, I am convinced that we shall never again see such a radical advancement in the world of Metal. It is, to be sure, a never to be repeated HM classic.

DEREK OLIVER

LED ZEPPELIN
'Physical Graffiti'
(Swan Song SSK 89 400-0)
Released 1975

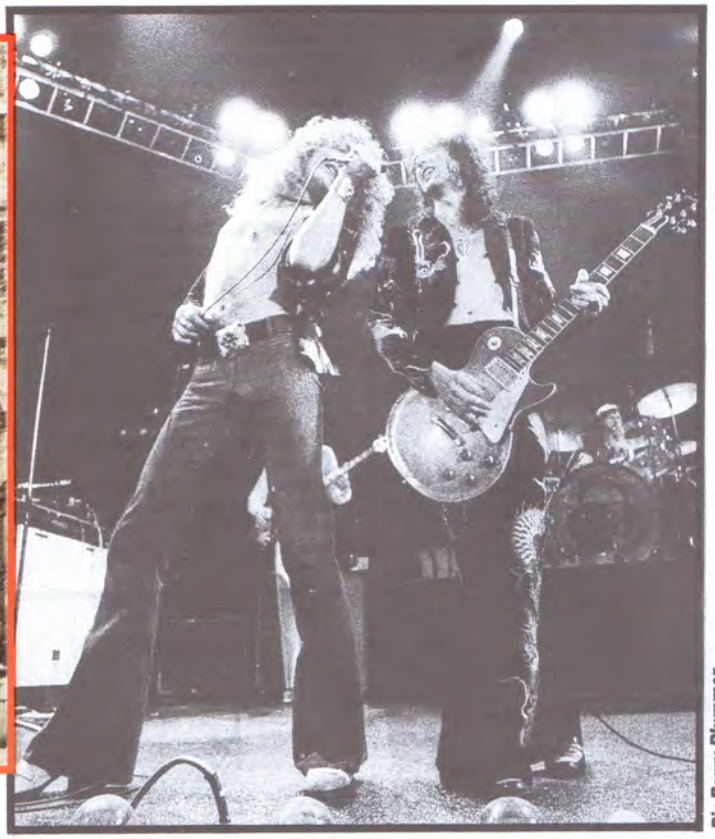
Jimmy Page (guitar), Robert Plant (vocals), John Paul Jones (bass), John Bonham (drums)

IT WOULD take a very brave rocker indeed to argue that 'Physical Graffiti' ought not to occupy the Number One spot. After all, Led Zep were the greatest rock 'n' roll band that ever existed.

Perhaps the most ironic thing is that this album was never actually intended to end up as the two-record blockbuster it eventually became. Recorded at the beginning of 1974 on Ronnie Lane's mobile studio at Headley Grange (the old Zep hangout in Hampshire), with Ron Nevison engineering, only eight songs were initially recorded. Of these 'Trampled Underfoot', 'Custard Pie', 'In My Time Of Dying' (a traditional number originally recorded by Bob Dylan but re-arranged by Zep) and 'In The Light' proved timeless in their magnitude and presentation.

However, it is the 10 minute long 'Kashmir' that really steals the show. Page, buzzing at the fingertips, came up with a classic riff, Bonzo smashed it into the floor and John Paul Jones, the mysterious bassist, supplemented the weird chord progression with mellotron effects that captured accurately the hot Eastern flavour poured out in Robert Plant's vocals.

So, by the middle months of '74 the band found themselves in the embarrassing position of having 54 minutes of music, too much in these days to be squeezed onto a single album and certainly not enough to fill a double . . . Only one answer, it was of course the perfect opportunity to utilize tracks left over from earlier sessions – and turn the whole project into a sumptuous double delight!



Pic Barry Plummer

PLANT and PAGE: simply, the greatest...?

Thus seven more tracks were added, all but one re-mixed from master tapes by the since deceased engineer Keith Harwood at Olympic Studios, London. Of these mostly acoustic tracks, three stand out: 'Down By The Seaside' (pinched from the third album sessions of 1970); 'Boogie With Stu' (recorded on the Rolling Stones mobile, early 1971 with Stones keyboard player Ian Stewart on barrelhouse piano); and 'Black Country Woman' (an out-take from the Stargrove sessions, and once again recorded on the Rolling Stones mobile – actually out in the grounds of Mick Jagger's home).

However, it is two electric rockers that make my hair stand on end. 'The Rover' (recorded Spring 1972) with its tight riff and brilliant macho vocal performance from Robert – a bona fide classic; and 'Houses Of The Holy' – originally the title-track from their 1972 fifth album but amazingly not included there. Incidentally, this is the one track that was left untouched and not re-mixed in any way.

Busy with their film the 'Song Remains The Same', Zeppelin didn't release 'Physical Graffiti' until six months after final mixing, in February 1975 (there were also sleeve manufacturing problems). The album natch, went straight to Number One in the UK and America simultaneously, with reports that in some town it was selling in excess of 300 copies an hour!

15 years on, 'Physical Graffiti' is still a monster achievement and one that will never be repeated. It is the very soul of rock music itself. DEREK OLIVER